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THE
CHRISTIAN FULFILMENTS AND USES
OF THE
LEVITICAL SIN-OFFERING.

BY THE
REV. HENRY BATCHELOR.



LONDON.
JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.

MDCCCLXXXVII.

PREFACE.

IN the preface to the “Incarnation of God and other Sermons,”¹ I mentioned my intention of issuing two other volumes, one on “The Christian Fulfilments and Uses of the Levitical Sacrifice,” and another on “The Revealed Destiny of the Wicked.” The former part of my design is before the reader in the present volume.

During my residence in Glasgow a course of lectures on revealed religion was delivered by ministers of all denominations. The late Dr. Jamieson of the Established Church and the late Principal Fairbairn of the Free Church projected the series and undertook the work of obtaining lecturers and selecting subjects. “The Levitical and Christian Atonement” was assigned to me. After the delivery of the lecture Principal Fairbairn wrote me the following note :—“Accept my thanks for your very full, clear, and excellent lecture on

¹ See notices of reviews at the end of this volume.

the Atonement. You have gone into the subject with great energy, and brought out an exposition which for the men of our city was much needed, and I am sure will be of material benefit to them." If the devout and learned author of the classical treatise on "The Typology of Scripture" were still amongst us, he would give a cordial welcome to this fuller and more complete representation of the same great subject.

May God graciously use it to direct the minds of those into whose hands it may fall to repair to His Word, which is the *only authority* on the momentous truth of sacrifice and atonement.

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THE
CHRISTIAN FULFILMENTS AND USES
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LEVITICAL SIN-OFFERING.

CHAPTER I.

THE BIBLICAL CONCEPTION OF NATURE.

“He left Himself not without witness. . . . The invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity.”—ST. PAUL.

“The universe doth convey authentic tidings of invisible things.”—WORDSWORTH.

“Matter exists only to represent some idea and body it forth.”—CARLYLE.

“The earth is crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God.”

HUMAN ideas of nature are as numerous and as varied as the standpoints from which it is regarded. What is the conception of nature which pervades, moulds, and saturates all Biblical representations? Beyond all doubt, that the universe is the product of a Spiritual Creator, has been

pre-ordained for spiritual ends, and is being guided by the spiritual providence of its Divine Author to the spiritual issues which were in His forethought anterior to all worlds.

A book inspired to exhibit this single view of nature is sure to be marked by very individual and decided peculiarities. You would not expect the Bible to be a scientific volume—not a collection of treatises intended to satisfy the demands of the inquisitive intellect. You would not resort to its pages either to unweave the tangles of metaphysics or to solve the problems of material science.

That the Bible does not offer a series of systematic disquisitions is not an unshared peculiarity. The Divine Word is simply co-ordinate with the Divine works. There are no astronomy, geology, chemistry, physiology, or metaphysics in nature, and no religious philosophy or articulated theology in the Bible. All the materials from which natural science and Biblical theology are respectively derived are extant, the former in the universe, the latter in the inspired documents. But science, whether material or spiritual, is ordered, methodised, and constructed by the logical understanding. All science is potential and latent only in the objects from which it is deduced. Only transitory petulance will disparage science, whether physical

or spiritual. Both are inevitable, and will survive through the ages.

Between natural and Biblical science there can be no essential contrariety. Science is an accurate interpretation of facts, whether in sacred creation or Holy Scripture, whether pertaining to the domain of matter or the domain of spirit. But we need, in our day, to distinguish between science and the philosophical speculations of scientific men. The one may be all truth, and the other all error. Evolutionism, for example, is only the fashionable and unverified hypothesis of certain eminent physicists. The foremost disciples of Comte have not emerged from the decried metaphysical stage of inquiry. Evolution is metaphysic, not science. The philosophy of a scientific expert is merely his subjective and personal speculation, only the record of his theoretic preferences and aversions. A man may be a leader in physical discovery, and may not only be far from an expert in religious philosophy, but he may be destitute of every condition for delivering a single accurate judgment on spiritual realities. In the region of experimental physics, which naturalists have patiently and laboriously traversed, we follow with gratitude and wonder; their hardy dogmatism in the sphere of spiritual truth, which they neither believe nor understand,

we read with commiseration unmingled with any respectful feeling.

But it is no part of our design to vindicate the reality of spiritual existences, laws, and operations. We take the revealed conception of the universe, with which we started, for granted. All the inspired writers were penetrated and possessed by the Biblical idea of nature. They knew no other. What we regard to be the primary aim of any existing thing will determine the use which we make of it. As the inspired teachers lived in a universe created for spiritual ends, all its visible objects reflected spiritual realities. Unconsciously, and without speculative reflection, they resorted to nature as a pre-ordained instrumentality to reveal man to himself and God to man. Creation was as truly symbolical to the Hebrew as the arrangements, the furniture, and the services of the Tabernacle.

To the merely secular physicist the universe is only a field for exploration : it is the great museum of the sciences. He discerns only material forces and material laws. Even vital organisms exist simply to be watched while alive, and to be dissected when dead. To its contents, as to an elaborate Chinese puzzle, he directs his eager quest and applies his ceaseless industry. But from nothing

does any light gleam or any voice murmur to intimate that unseen realities are behind all, and which all were intended to suggest, forthshadow, and illustrate.

In the great visible system the idolatrous devotee of art discovers inexhaustible treasures of all things sublime and beautiful. Nature is a vast gallery of productions bright and symmetrical, picturesque and fair.

Even the poet, to whose eye every sight comes transfigured with celestial radiance, and on whose ear every sound falls with celestial melody, may be stone-blind to the glory and beauty of the spiritual realm, and deaf as an adder to its undertones of truth and power.

To an inspired man of God—prophet, psalmist, or apostle,—or to any one actuated by the Biblical spirit—patriarch, lawgiver, judge, king, or toiler at the plough,—nature, including the history and the life of man, is stored with symbols of things unseen. The universe is a hieroglyph of viewless things, Divine, human, and satanic.

Imagine that two men hewed and reared two monoliths, one for each, as his respective memorial. Conceive that the one monolith was without inscription or ornament. That, of course, would afford the least possible information about the

mind that dictated and the hand that raised it. But suppose that the other monolith is richly embellished and engraven all over with recitals and delineations of the character and acts of its author. The latter monolith is the image of nature. The cosmos,—the sun, the moon, the stars, the world, the sea, the mountain, the field, the flood,—man and beast, and tree and wild-flower, are covered over, within and without, with hieroglyphical inscriptions and portraitures outlining some phase of Godhead.

When we turn to Holy Scripture, we find that God is a lawgiver,¹ a judge,² a king,³ a man of war,⁴ a saviour,⁵ a redeemer,⁶ a destroyer,⁷ a shepherd,⁸ a sheep owner,⁹ a husbandman,¹⁰ a proprietor of a vineyard,¹¹ a usurer,¹² a householder,¹³ a master,¹⁴ a rich man,¹⁵ a potter,¹⁶ a physician,¹⁷ a smelter of metals,¹⁸ an archer,¹⁹ a builder,²⁰ a husband,²¹ a father,²² a mother,²³ more than a mother,²⁴

¹ Isa. xxxiii. 22.² *Ibid.*³ *Ibid.*⁴ Exod. xv. 3 ; Jer. l. 25 ; Deut. xxxii. 41.⁵ Psalm cvi. 21.⁶ Isa. xli. 14.⁷ Gen. vi. 17.⁸ Psalm xxiii. 1.⁹ Luke xv. 3-7.¹⁰ John xv. 1.¹¹ Luke xiii. 6.¹² Matt. xxv. 14-30.¹³ Matt. xxi. 33-44.¹⁴ Luke xvii. 7-10.¹⁵ Luke xvi. 1-9.¹⁶ Jer. xviii. 6.¹⁷ Jer. xvii. 14.¹⁸ Mal. iii. 3 ; Isa. i. 25 ; Ezek. xxii. 18-22.¹⁹ Deut. xxxii. 23 ; Lam. iii. 12-13.²⁰ Heb. iii. 4.²¹ Isa. liv. 5.²² Luke xv. 11-32.²³ Isa. lxvi. 13 ; xlvi. 3-4.²⁴ Isa. xlix. 15.

an eagle,¹ a wild beast,² a lion,³ a young lion,⁴ a leopard,⁵ a she-bear,⁶ a rock,⁷ a tree,⁸ a tower,⁹ a fortress,¹⁰ a rearward,¹¹ a dwelling-place,¹² a sun,¹³ a shield,¹⁴ a horn,¹⁵ a refiner's fire,¹⁶ fuller's lye,¹⁷ a gin,¹⁸ a snare,¹⁹ a stone of stumbling,²⁰ a flame,²¹ rottenness,²² a moth,²³ a consuming fire,²⁴ light,²⁵ love.²⁶

Nature not only abounds in resources for embodying inspired conceptions of God; it provides the means of disclosing and expressing man to himself. Matter exists for mind. Spirit is dependent on sense for the clothing of its most immaterial ideas. How readily creation lends its aid to utter the evil tendencies in human nature, character, and action! The serpent, the viper, the wasp, the spider, the fox, the tiger, the swine are parables of men. Epithets derived from the brutal and the bestial are indispensable to brand the foulest types of human life. All things that wriggle and slime, crawl and double, are inevitably

¹ Exod. xix. 4; Deut. xxxii. 11-12. ² Psalm l. 22. ³ Hos. v. 14.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Hos. xiii. 7-8.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Psalm xviii. 31.

⁸ Hos. xiv. 8.

⁹ Psalm lxi. 3.

¹⁰ Psalm xci. 2.

¹¹ Isa. lii. 12.

¹² Psalm xc. 1.

¹³ Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Psalm xviii. 2.

¹⁶ Mal. iii. 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Isa. viii. 14-15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Isa. x. 17.

²² Hos. v. 12.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Heb. xii. 29.

²⁵ I John i. 5.

²⁶ I John iv. 8.

symbolical in a fallen world. "Crooked" ways have almost ceased to be physical. In our thoughts they are nearly exclusively moral.

Even death had to precede man, or the earth would have been unfit for his reception and probation. "*Thou shalt surely die*" would have been absolutely meaningless to Adam and Eve if the outward tokens of death had never been seen by them. They had beheld the eye of one creature after another glaze in death, had caught their last sigh, had witnessed the limbs stiffen, and had shrunk back when the animal that died yesterday was as cold as a stone to the touch to-day. The mystery of dissolution in the lower animals had penetrated their hearts. How else could even a remote glimmer of meaning flicker in the threatening, "*Thou shalt surely die*"?

What is the implication which underlies the Biblical conception of nature and the Biblical uses of natural phenomena? Obviously that the universe proceeded from a spiritual Creator, and that it was intended for spiritual creatures, who were to be provided with inspired instruction, namely, men endowed with the vision to discern and the aptitudes to employ the treasures of spiritual suggestion and exposition in the works of God. Nature and man constitute the raw materials

designed to express a revelation of the Unseen and Eternal. The heavens, the earth, and humanity were pre-ordained, in all their particulars, as the indispensable antecedents to the Bible. Without the world and man the Bible is an impossibility. The Bible is greater than man and nature. There is more of God in the Bible than in the universe and man without the Bible. Men and the great system of things are subservient to the Bible as a revelation of God. The Bible exhausts both nature and humanity. As the united and pre-formed means of expressing inspired disclosures of visible realities, the work of man and the world is done. As a revelation the Bible is complete. It tells us all that can be known of God up to the present date. When human nature is exalted to realms of clearer vision, the precious Book will need revisal. By eyes and hands, implements and aids, unlike our own, and in scenes more fair and holy, the task will be performed.

The Bible, of course, does not exist for itself: it is only a book. Its purport is to provide the clue to the Divine meaning of the universe, and to unveil more of God to man, and to attract man to God. In using universal nature as a treasure-house of hallowed symbols of things unseen, inspired men were wholly unconscious of what their method

pre-supposed. Savages are not more ignorant of the sciences of grammar, logic, and rhetoric which lie hidden in their simple speech and untutored thought.

It was different with our Blessed Lord. He knew that the phenomena of nature are only a hieroglyphical veil, like that before the most holy place, inwrought with signs and figures of invisible things. When Jesus said, "I am the *true* vine,"¹ He implied that the physical universe is a picture, and that the spiritual universe is the thing depicted. We are apt to think that the vine rooted in the soil is the real thing, and that Jesus is but the figurative vine. But our Lord speaks differently. The *vine* is the *figure*, *Jesus* is the *fact*; the *vine* is the *shadow*, *Jesus* is the *substance*; the *vine* is the *image*, *Jesus* is the *reality*. He whom we call Jesus Christ pre-existed the vine. Why did God create the vine? What is its chief purport in this great scheme? Is it to grow, be beautiful, and bear fruit? These are only its lower and provisional uses. The plant is only one phenomenon among many in a transitory scene intended to reveal and portray the Lord Jesus. Jesus Christ is the Eternal Verity; and the vine was here that He might hold it forth as the emblem of Himself, and

¹ John xv. 1.

spiritual life in Him. The supreme end of every visible thing is to minister to the invisible.

Just as a schoolmaster, before he collects his pupils, hangs diagrams, models, and pictures on the walls of his school as auxiliaries to his lessons and illustrations of his meaning, so the Great Teacher, in nature without and nature within, has created all the necessary materials and resources to embody and illumine thoughts inspired by Himself and recorded for all the world. Hence, when Jesus came, He was able to point to the sun in the heavens and say, "That is not the world's light; '*I am the Light of the world.*'"¹ I was before that. That is only a fleeting image, which will flame its brief hour and vanish. It burns to reflect me. That is its primary and supreme vocation. To become a star in a vast economy of celestial order, a centre of revolving worlds, and the arbiter of days and seasons and harvests, is its temporary and subordinate purpose. You are passing to scenes where they need no sun. I shall be your Sun. I am the reality, that is the symbol. Where there is truth there is no more emblem. I am to the mind and heart and life of man all of which that is the ordained parable."

An architect rears and adorns a church with the

¹ John viii. 12; ix. 5.

foregone design of adapting all its arrangements and details for worship and instruction; so the great system of nature and man are one concordant instrumentality and the predetermined antecedents to a Bible revealing God. It is quite possible that there are created beings who would need only to look on a planet like ours, even before the appearance of Adam; in order to say, "When rational creatures are placed in that world, in due time they will be furnished with a Bible." As they gazed around, their intelligence and experience might enable them to conclude, "All these things forecast inspired disclosures of God Most High."

CHAPTER II.

THE SEMITIC MEDIUM OF BIBLICAL REVELATION.

“Salvation is from the Jews.”—JESUS CHRIST.

THE Bible has been given to us through a race which, up to the time of the completion of the sacred documents, exhibited no trace of philosophical or scientific instincts. Had Holy Scripture come to us through the Greeks, it would have been ascribed to Hellenic speculation and discovery. The objection is forestalled and annulled by assigning the vocation to a Semitic tribe.

It is sometimes alleged that the Hebrew people represent the genius for religion, just as Greece represented the genius for art, and Rome the genius for government. We are meant to infer that religion, art, and government are natural growths of human origin, differing in value, but of co-ordinate authority. That the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Roman received each a providential calling and qualifications to discharge its responsibilities, it

would be idle to question. The idiosyncrasy attributed to the Hebrew must be admitted by all candid inquirers, but under the limitation that religious aptitudes can never be the source, and can only become the medium, of revealed disclosures. Accepted with this modification, the assertion merely informs us that God selects adapted instruments for the fulfilment of a vocation to which He calls them.

That the Bible is the product of the natural genius of the Hebrew is contradicted by the entire course of Hebrew national life. Abraham, the leader of the race, was nurtured in idolatry. Paganism was the incurable proclivity of his descendants, and was arrested and subdued only by such fiery tribulations as Divine Providence has applied to no other nationality. Religious susceptibility, like the tendrils of parasitic vegetation, is entirely dependent on external aid for the direction of its growth, and will either coil in the mire or grasp the offered support and mount into the sunshine.

It needs little reflection to discern some of the reasons why the Hebrew was the preferred depository of a revelation from God. To have intrusted the only true religion to a race of conquerors like the Romans, would have contradicted its spirit, misrepresented its origin, and

erected a despotism more frightful than any under which the world has groaned. If the Greeks had been the selected people, the form which the revelation would have assumed would have defeated its aim. The Bible would have been subtle, speculative, transcendental, fascinating to an élite minority, but estranged from the common heart and life of man. A child-like and believing Hebrew was evidently the choicest vehicle of a supernatural revelation. The names of Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, St. John, St. Paul, and many besides, amply vindicate the assertion. The Hebrew nature presented as transparent and colourless a medium for transmitting the Divine light to the world as was possible to humanity. Hence the chief characteristics of Holy Scripture are simplicity, artlessness, faith, veracity, reverence.

CHAPTER III.

THE REVEALED NATURE OF GOD.

“Some men seem to think the only character of the Author of nature to be that of simple absolute benevolence. This, considered as a principle of action and infinite in degree, is a disposition to produce the greatest possible happiness without regard to persons’ behaviour. . . . Now surely this ought not to be asserted unless it can be proved, for we should speak with cautious reverence on such a subject.”—BISHOP BUTLER.

OUR knowledge of one another is not immediate, but analogical. Contact of soul with soul is impossible to human beings. Whether there are created spirits wholly incorporeal, and if so, whether they are capable of holding direct intercourse with one another, it would be idle to conjecture. The most intimate fellowship between one human mind and another has to be mediated by facial expressions, vocal sounds, corporeal attitudes and gestures, and similar devices. We know of no communication between spirit and spirit except through the instrumentality of the body. Souls are absolutely isolated from each other. No man ever directly

communicated with another. Corporeal signs, apparent only to sense, and which we mentally interpret, are our only means of intercourse. Man can get no nearer to man. In what measure intuition and inference unite in the process, or, in other words, how far our perceptions are instinctive and acquired, it does not concern us here to discuss. We know one another only through bodily telegraphy.

No doubt we often and very seriously misconstrue each other. Human beings are far more unlike one another than they commonly realise. As far as one man differs from another, the one is liable to misinterpret the other. We can scarcely avoid generalising our own consciousness and experience, and ascribing their phenomena to the species. We seem almost shut up to translate others by their assumed resemblances to ourselves. For the most part the method is sound and the results trustworthy. Still it is not always easy to say how far certain mental phenomena should be considered individual or universal. Variant and almost opposed types of mind must be embraced by a human psychology, and must not be ignored by a catholic faith.

But it is, perhaps, in relation to character that we are often made to feel how far men may be

sundered from each other. For a long series of years you witness in some one all the corporeal signs of veracity, uprightness, and honour. You come at length to rely on the persistence of these attributes with the same confidence with which you depend upon the invariability of gravitation. Then one day you suddenly discover that all the telegraphic signals which have passed from another mind to your own were all untrustworthy and misleading. Your interpretations were all deceptive. You never knew the man.

Since our knowledge of one another is only mediate and indirect, none can feel astonished that we have no knowledge of God which is direct and immediate. God can be disclosed to us only through analogy, symbol, resemblance, parable, and similar instrumentalities. We have seen in a previous chapter with how unrestrained an instinct and in what bold and startling imagery inspired men portrayed the Divine nature, character, and action. Devout men in our day would hesitate to paint the Divine attributes and energies in colours so terrestrial and unsubdued. Yet the men of old were penetrated by a reverence and awe which we shall not surpass, and can only endeavour to imitate.

Unbelievers object to the anthropomorphism of the Biblical revelation. It is one of the most

shallow of all sceptical cavils. If God is to be unfolded to man, it must be effected through the analogies of our own nature and the symbolism of the world. We must be spoken to after the manner of men. It would be useless to address us in modes adapted only to angels. Of what avail would be a document in Arabic to a population exclusively restricted to the knowledge of English? That the Bible is so thoroughly and uniquely human is strong presumptive evidence that it is Divine. Holy Scripture contains all the means for correcting any erroneous inference to which its anthropopathic representations are liable. The difference between the anthropomorphic conceptions of a Hebrew prophet and a European philosopher is only infinitesimal. If the intelligences of higher worlds smile, it must surely be at the imaginary superiority in Divine knowledge of the modern sage over the ancient seer. We profoundly need the vivid and potent symbolism of the Word of God, and must resist its displacement for the vague, hazy, and meaningless abstractions of a vain, fastidious, and lifeless theosophy.

Amongst the numerous analogies which illustrate the nature and attributes of God, two may be considered as generic, namely, Father, and Supreme Ruler of men. Creator is a very common epithet

applied to the Deity, but it can scarcely be called analogical. It merely denotes the nature and volition of the Almighty in regard to relations and acts wholly beyond our comprehension. The origination of this vast and inscrutable system is something to our faculties standing alone. It is unique, incomparable, and without illustration. Atoner is another dominant conception of God, and in which the attributes of the Father and the Supreme Ruler unite. The explication of Atoner belongs to a later chapter. The universe and man did not include means of symbolising this phase of the Divine nature and activity. Revealed ordinances were perpetuated through long centuries to enact atonement in Israel, and to develop a national consciousness to apprehend it. The chronological order of the Divine self-manifestation, as set forth in Holy Scripture, is — Creator, Father, Supreme Ruler, Atoner. With the three last we are immediately concerned. The consideration of the first does not come within the scope of this treatise.

A revelation of God through analogies is liable to all extremes of misinterpretation. The very form of such a disclosure of the unseen must become a tremendous moral test of the creatures to whom it is presented. Analogies, symbols, parables, illustrations never apply all round. They are designed

to shed light only on specific aspects and characteristics of invisible realities. Beyond the phases of truth which they serve to illumine, they may become seriously misleading, and lie open to unlimited perversion and misconstruction. The Divine names and perfections are often distorted and disguised in theological apprehensions. One mind is captivated by one analogy and another by another, and are blind to all besides. Few exhibit the intellectual, spiritual, and emotional comprehensiveness which receives and reflects the phases of Divine manifestation in the proportion and completeness in which they are displayed in the body of inspired truth itself. We live in an age of reaction and exaggeration, of morbid idiosyncrasy, and of doctrinal upheaval and transition.

The fundamental question underlying all current discussion is what do the analogies through which God has been pleased to reveal Himself actually denote? What do the names Father, Ruler, Atoner, unfold to us of the Divine nature, relation, and action? What is God? That is the core of all religious inquiry. In a past age Divine fatherliness was too much overshadowed, and God appeared too exclusively as a crystallisation of holy law,—sublime, no doubt, but too awful and forbidding for poor creatures stricken with a sense of sin and

prone to despair of Divine mercy. We are now in the midst of more dangerous extravagance. God is declared to be nothing but a mild and compliant Father, and the analogy of the righteous Lawgiver and Judge is cancelled. Even pulpits are proclaiming a deity from whom transgressors may expect weak and reckless indulgence. That God is a moral Ruler of inflexible rectitude is spurned as effete, though occupying a larger space in Biblical symbolism and in the inspired records of the Divine conduct than the parental relation. The disclosure of God as the Atoner is similarly obscured and well nigh blotted out. Moral bonds are threatened and moral character imperilled by this vicious tampering with the inspired portraiture of the Most High. The nature of God, as presented in the authoritative Word, is refracted, confused, and disfigured in our day by idiosyncratic propensity, by reactionary biasses and aversions, and by unyielding antipathy to the attributes of the revealed Divinity.

Good and faithful men are unconsciously penetrated and controlled by the prevalent spirit of rationalism. One Biblical truth after another is to be obliterated, because it cannot be construed to the satisfaction of individual predilection, or be reduced to consistency with popular errors.

We are in an age of subjective theologies.

Notions of God are not derived from a calm, rigorous and submissive induction of facts and assertions of Holy Writ, but are projected by the inclinations and tastes of those who fabricate and adopt them. Lord Bacon assigned to man the place of "servant and interpreter" in the realm of discovery;¹ but nowadays he has passed beyond these lowly functions. Man is no longer a "servant;" he is master. He has ceased to be an "interpreter;" he is sovereign arbiter. "Man is the measure of all things," long ago said Protagoras.² Our arrogant rationalism has adopted the maxim, not as expressing the Protagorean doctrine of the relativity and partiality of human knowledge, but as the proclamation of its presumptuous conviction that man himself is the sole test and gauge of all truth. Even the inspired message of the Almighty is to be submitted to the self-sufficient discernment of men, in order to be approved or reprobated.

Clearly, to minds in such a posture, revelation is unnecessary, and if necessary, is altogether impossible. A communication from God to man would be sure to transcend our understandings in various directions. Its substance would be transparent and palpable, but its relations and bearings would

¹ "Homo, naturæ minister et interpretēs."—*Nov. Org.*, Aph. 1.

² Πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος.—*Diog.* l. ix. 51.

as certainly excite endless questionings, and satisfy none. At the back of every fresh disclosure of Divine truth there must lie a vaster region of mystery, the existence of which the disclosure will imply and intimate, but will not illumine. The Gospel displays more truth than does the Law, but the Gospel has necessarily suggested more insoluble problems to us than did the Law to the disciples of Moses. Without the stars we should not know that there was a universe beyond and around the world. But how much more immense is the darkness which the stars reveal than the infinitesimal light which they shed forth !

Then words addressed to sinful creatures cannot fail to clash with their prepossessions and desires. In such circumstances, if man himself, instead of a humble interpreter, is to be the standard by which the revealed mind of God is to be weighed and squared, then the revealed mind of God must be rejected. Rationalism withstands its approach at the threshold, and bars all access to the soul.

Men never so much needed to be reminded of the Divine rebuke, "*Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself.*"¹ True, "*God created man in His own image,*"² but human

¹ Psalm l. 21.

² Gen. i. 27.

resemblances to the Divine have their limits. The infinite original immeasurably transcends the finite likeness. Hence the Almighty had to protest, "*My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*"¹ Every human similitude which illustrates the nature of God has to be expanded to infinity and refined to perfection. Many acknowledge an Infinite Father, not as self-disclosed in Holy Scripture, but such a Father as they conceive that he ought to be. The Pagan fabricates the god which he adores. He leaves the traces of his own graving tool on the entire surface of his idol. In our Christian land "*there are gods many and lords many.*"² The lines of the intellectual, emotional, and æsthetical moulds in which they have been cast remain upon them all. Their origin and workmanship are as apparent as if they were visible in ebony, bronze, or marble. No doubt the spiritual needs of one man will prompt him to contemplate with absorbing exclusiveness some one phase of the revealed Deity; and another will feel attracted, through contrary wants, by a different aspect of the Divine self-manifestation. The

¹ Isa. lv. 8-9.

² 1 Cor. viii. 5.

same person at different stages of his history and experience will find himself drawn now towards one view of the nature of God and now towards another. But we may not fashion to our minds a caricature of the Deity, worship the apotheosis of a favourite attribute, and proclaim, "That is all that God is—that and no more."

Some years since, on a pitch-dark night at the turn of the tide, we threaded our path among fragments of rock to a sea-cave. We felt our way in, and heard the crash of the long, invisible waves at our back. We turned round and sat on a block in the throat of the cavern. Our face was towards the deep. At first we could see nothing. For a moment all was darkness. Next instant, when the wave broke, an extended line of pale phosphorescent light flickered along the beach. Then all was darkness again. The phosphorescence shone forth afresh along the whole surface of each wave in succession as it rose and fell. The great ocean beyond was all unseen, but yet its existence and properties were somewhat displayed by the flashing movements and glistening curves of the breakers rushing in out of the depth and darkness. It seemed the very symbol of the Great God, whose nature and perfections in their infinite extent are all unknown and unknowable, but which have

broken on the shores of our limitation in gleams of mystery and splendours of revealing brightness. We went home thanking God that from the darkness He had shed forth such out-beamings of gracious, tender, and consolatory light.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST AND CHIEF TESTIMONY TO THE MISSION OF CHRIST BY THE LAST AND GREATEST OF THE PROPHETS.

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”—JOHN THE BAPTIST.

“Je vois la religion chrétienne fondée sur une religion précédente.”—PASCAL.

THE New Testament does not profess to make known a religious system which is entirely novel and original. Christianity avowedly appears in the midst of human affairs to fulfil a series of transactions and discoveries which stretch backwards through all history right up to the beginning. The several revealed economies are only different stages of one identical Divine religion. The attributes of God acknowledged under the New Dispensation were not unknown under the Old Dispensation. The difference is one of light. The contrast between the Old and the New is that presented by the dawn and the day. The Bible is an organic whole. There is no point at which it can be

rent asunder without the destruction of all its parts and contents. Abraham is inseparable from Adam, Moses from Abraham, and Christ from Moses. Without the revelation to the first family, without the promises to the patriarchs, without the Law and the Prophets, there can be no Gospel. The two great portions into which we popularly divide the Sacred Scriptures must lead none to suppose that a great gulf sunders the two economies. The New Testament is a blossom, and the Old Testament is its leaves, stem, and root. The truth, life, and aim of the Old Testament are prolonged into the New Testament, and there perfected. Malachi must not be wrenched from Matthew. Matthew acknowledges Malachi. Malachi is realised in Matthew. The Lord Jesus, according to His own testimony, did not merely fulfil here and there a stray text of the ancient word. The whole body of Holy Scripture received its absolute accomplishment in Him. He appeals to the "Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms,"¹—the current mode of citing the entire books of the Old Testament,—as bearing united and convergent witness to His person and work.

*"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*² In these remarkable words

¹ Luke xxiv. 4.

² John i. 29.

the last and greatest of God's ancient messengers made known the person and foretold the supreme achievement of the incarnate Saviour. No one can put even a plausible construction upon this impressive utterance of the distinguished prophet who does not receive Holy Scripture as one related and inseparable whole. This New Testament sentence demands an Old Testament exposition. The past must illumine its meaning, or the grand announcement with which the soul of the prophet was burdened, which the hour demanded, which is indispensable to the ages, must remain without interpretation.

I shall endeavour to show what must have been the general meaning which an enlightened and spiritual Hebrew could not fail to attach to the words of the prophet.

§ 1. It will be important to glance at the age when the Baptist pointed out our Lord to His disciples. We are to imagine ourselves still under the Mosaic economy. Jesus has been baptized by John, and has returned from His temptation in the wilderness. The ministry of the Christ lies all as yet in the future. He is unknown in Galilee, Judea, and Samaria.

Till the great preacher of the wilderness arose,

it was a time of declension and death. Religious ordinances were abundantly maintained, and religious observances were ostentatiously performed. When the religion of a people has arrived at its consumptive stage, it commonly wears an external flush far brighter than the hue of health. When the spiritual night is the darkest, the phosphorescence of decay is mistaken for the light of life.

In periods of religious formalism society usually separates into at least three classes—Pharisees, Sadducees, publicans and sinners. These names do not represent a classification of men which is accidental and local, but one which is human and universal. The mind of man can work in only one way, and human life weaves the same general pattern under all religions, true or false. The differential quality in revealed religion must be sought not in its modes so much as in its spirit. If one set of men exaggerate rites and ceremonies, another set of men will rise up and dispute the validity of the spiritual ideas which underlie all godliness; and the multitude will become besotted, and care neither for sacramentarians nor sceptics. Ritualists, infidels, and a great godless mass are always co-workers in such a community, acting and reacting on one another.

§ 2. We need, next, to recall the Divine teaching of that particular time. When the religious life declined among the Jews, and when they fell into idolatry, they commonly became the prey of foreign despotisms. This consequence usually followed a number of natural causes, arising out of the relations of the Hebrews to contemporary monarchies, but was at the same time always designed by the Supreme Ruler to correct the delinquencies of the covenant people. This is their state at the precise date now under consideration. They are subject to the conquering arm of Rome.

It was customary to associate with such disciplinary events the living voice of the prophet to recall the nation to obedience and to God. Such is the condition of Israel at the moment before us. The precursory ministry of John the Baptist is in full and vigorous exercise. He was the last and greatest of the prophetic race entirely within the limits of the former economy.

In the person of our Lord both dispensations met. Jesus Christ was the last teacher of the economy going out, and the first teacher of the economy coming in. He was "*born under the law.*"¹ He was "*a minister of the circumcision.*" But His, too, was the "*more excellent ministry.*"²

¹ Gal. iv. 4.

² Rom. xv. 8.

He was the "*Mediator of the new*" and "*better covenant.*"¹ Some of the light of the future the Lord Jesus shed backwards on John, the last complete representative of the past; and not a little of the darkness of the past stretched forward over the early days of the apostolic representatives of the future, till scattered on the day of Pentecost by the perfect splendour of the risen Sun.

§ 3. We must now pause and ask, What was the special moral aim of the Baptist's ministry? Beyond all doubt, John's vocation was to awaken the sense of sin, and to baptize men in token of the fact that they needed to repent of their iniquities. Who is the model of the Baptist? His work is to be done "*in the spirit and power of Elijah.*"² Elijah was the very impersonation of the law. He embodied and expressed the Divine consciousness both of the holiness of the inspired code and the rectitude of its sanctions, and of the inherent evil and ill-desert of all transgression. The mission of the Tishbite was to revive to the religious sensibilities of the northern tribes the spiritual significance and force of the old economy in an unspiritual and sensual age.

The unique and peculiar phase of John's vocation,

¹ Heb. viii. 6.

² Luke i. 17.

as the predicted, chosen, and qualified forerunner of Christ, must not be forgotten. To bring back to the heart the forgotten worth of the *old* is always the indispensable preparation for the *new*. This is the commission of the Baptist. His labours are to restore, by means of conviction of sin, a deeper interest in the lifeless forms of law, and thus awaken inward longings after the approaching Gospel.

If the Hebrews had been faithful to the spiritual life of the Old Testament, they would have passed by an easy transition from the Law to the Gospel. Reverence for Moses and vital sympathy with the prefigurative teaching of the Pentateuch would have prompted a joyful welcome for Christ. But even the preaching of John did not bridge over the chasm which separated the covenant nation from the Lord. Pharisees were blinded by externalism, and Sadducees were hardened by scepticism. As in all communities in a like moral condition throughout the ages, the publicans and sinners confessed to John and drew near to Jesus.

§ 4. The Baptist's ministry has not been a failure. It has done its work with some. The consciousness of sin is alive within them. They acknowledge him as their Rabbi, and have attached themselves to him as his disciples.

What will John do next? His ability is exhausted. He can rouse the conscience; he cannot pacify it. His mission is precursory. While the prophet was discharging his baptismal ministry, the Christ Himself was revealed to him, and authenticated by supernatural attestation. John announces to the representatives from the metropolis and to his own followers that the One greater than himself is in their midst. The very next day the Great Unknown, fresh from the conflict and victory of the wilderness, is seen approaching. In what terms might we expect the forerunner to proclaim his Greater Successor? No hazy and enigmatical sentences could proceed from either the first or second Elijah. They would be alien to the nature and vocation of both. Bold, vivid, clear-cut utterances are alone possible to such men. When the Baptist publicly ushers in the Christ, no dubiety will be found in his brief, keen, and energetic epithets. With uplifted finger towards the advancing figure of the Anointed of Jehovah, we hear him cry, "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*"¹

One who could lift the burden of sin from the conscience was the palpable and urgent requirement of the passing hour. Souls are bowed beneath the

¹ John i. 29.

terrible words of the prophet, but he is unable to release them from the load. Is not deliverance from the crushing weight of guilty memories, where the sense of sin is alive and unappeasable, the pressing need of universal humanity? Surely in this condensed and pregnant outcry the greatest of the prophets has grasped the very core and essence of the Gospel for the ages—the Gospel at once of past shadow and present reality, of predictive figure and historic fact.

What is the one absorbing, exclusive conception of the Christ to the prophetic insight and illumination of the Baptist? In the light of John's inspired vision He is the SIN-BEARER. The treatment of John's announcement, in a book somewhat popular at the time of its appearance, is an uncritical, unhistorical, and unscriptural travesty of the great message.¹ The most notable peculiarity of the Mosaic economy was its sacrificial system. The entire utterance under consideration is derived from the settled and exact terminology of the Hebrew ritual. A lamb to take away sin denoted one single, inevitable idea to a Hebrew—an idea which at least upwards of fifteen hundred years had wrought into the national consciousness. Job, Abraham, Noah, and even Abel, I doubt not,

¹ "Ecce Homo."

would have understood the words as certainly, if not as fully, as Moses.

What was the meaning of taking away sin to every son of Abraham? It has always seemed to me that our translators would have done better if they had conformed the rendering to the invariable usage of the Old Testament. The nature of the sacrificial transaction would then have been apparent to every reader. To “*bear*” sin, not to take it away, is the representation in the Levitical institutes. To “*bear*” sin is to suffer the penalty which is its due.

Men might “BEAR” sin by enduring its penalties in their own person. Hence we find, “Thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall *bear* his sin,”¹ that is, shall experience the penal consequences. This law was published in connection with an actual instance of blasphemy, and “*bearing*” sin was being stoned to death. The general terms of the statute would henceforth denounce capital punishment against all similar acts of profanity. We read in another place, “Henceforth the children of Israel shall not come nigh to the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin and die;”² that is, the results of their conduct will overtake them if they transgress

¹ Lev. xxiv. 15.

² Num. xviii. 22.

the prohibition. "Lest they *bear* sin and die" is literally "to *bear* sin, to die." The words announce the certain issue of disobedience. "To *bear* sin" declares the fact that the punishment will be inflicted. "To die" defines the specific nature of the penalty.

The signification of no phrase in Holy Scripture is attested by a larger induction of texts than "*bearing*" sin in the sense of enduring its punishment. In the books of Leviticus and Numbers the technical reiteration of this idiom in judicial diction abounds.¹ A great prophet exhorting to repentance, and assuring the people that they will be treated according to their personal behaviour, protests in the same terms, "The son shall not *bear* the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father *bear* the iniquity of the son."²

The vicarious BEARING of sin, namely, the substitutionary endurance of penalties, is set forth by precisely the same expression. It is the established Levitical formula. "The sin-offering is most holy, and [God] hath given it you to *bear* the iniquity of the congregation."³ Employing this exact and technical idiom, the evangelical prophet declared

¹ Lev. v. 1, 17; vii. 18; xvii. 16; xix. 8; xx. 17, 19, 20; xxii. 16; Num. v. 31; ix. 13; xxx. 16 (15), &c.

² Ezek. xviii. 20.

³ Lev. x. 17. See Lev. xvi. 22.

of the Messiah, "He *bare* the sin of many."¹ In the previous verse, resorting to a verb seemingly equivalent, he predicted, "He shall *bear* their iniquities."²

As sin might be borne, that is, its penal consequences might be endured, either in person or by substitution, this reiterated Levitical formula naturally introduced the prescribed vicarious sacrifice. Thus we read, "If any one sin, in that he heareth the voice of adjuration, he being a witness, whether he hath seen or known, and if he do not utter it, then he shall *bear* his iniquity."³ "To *bear* his iniquity" here is to provide a sin-offering. The required sacrifice is immediately specified. In the same chapter the trespass-offering comes before us.⁴ The one identical formula is prefixed, and "*bearing* iniquity" is fulfilling the sacrificial ordinance.

"*Bearing* sin," therefore, in Levitical technicality, meant either of two things: the transgressor must either endure the punishment of his sins in his own person, or he must appear before God with the requisite sacrifice. The only alternative known to the Mosaic legislation was either to present the ritual oblation or to suffer all the penal deserts of transgression. It underlies all the provisions of

¹ Isa. liii. 12.

² Isa. liii. 11.

³ Lev. v. 1.

⁴ Lev. v. 17.

the sin-offering and trespass-offering. In the law of the Passover the two only possibilities come together in the same verse. "The man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbearcth to keep the Passover, that soul shall be *cut off* from his people: because he brought not the oblation of the Lord in its appointed season, that man shall *bear* his sin."¹

The penalties which should descend to posterity were recorded in precisely identical terms. "Your children shall be wanderers in the wilderness forty years, and shall *bear* your whoredoms, until your carcases be consumed in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye spied out the land, even forty days, for every day a year, shall ye *bear* your iniquities, even forty years; and ye shall know my alienation."² The law of heritage is likewise recognised by the prophet Jeremiah: "Our fathers have sinned, and are not, and we have *borne* their iniquities."³

The same form of expression denoted the official acts of the priesthood in the discharge of their sacerdotal functions. "And the Lord said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons, and thy father's house with thee, shall *bear* the iniquity of the sanctuary,"⁴ &c.

¹ Num. ix. 13. See also Lev. xxii. 9.

² Num. xiv. 33-34. ³ Lam. v. 7.

⁴ Num. xviii. 1. See also Exod. xxviii. 38, 43.

The symbolical endurance of penalties is represented in the same established locutions. “Lie thou upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt *bear* their iniquity. For I have appointed the years of their iniquity to be unto thee . . . so shalt thou *bear* the iniquity of the house of Israel.”¹

What, then, must a Hebrew have understood by a lamb, a sin-bearer? The vicarious bearer of the sins of others must either bear—endure—the punishments which they merited, or he must present the indispensable sin-offering on their behalf. This is the natural and obvious teaching of the citations which have passed under review—legal, ritual, historical, prophetic. That the one grand vocation of the Lord Jesus was to become an offering for sin, and by His endurance obliterate the penalties due to men, is the unavoidable import of the Baptist’s declaration. The vocation of John, the greatest of the prophets, was to herald the Christ in no uncertain or misleading terms. To his illumined and clarified vision a vicarious death was the very core of the Gospel about to be proclaimed to the world.

Much discussion and learning have been expended

¹ Ezek. iv. 4-5.

on the alternative renderings to "*bear*" sin and to "*take*" it "*away*." The dispute is an unimportant and fruitless one. To "*bear*," as argued above, would have placed the ordinary reader at once in possession of the Levitical conception, and which must be seized in all its completeness by an adequate interpretation of the Hebrew text. That would have been a great advantage. But to "*take away*" is beyond all doubt, to my mind, the idea in the cry of John. He does not echo any of the equivalents of the original Hebrew which occur in the Septuagint, but selects a Greek word the most suitable to express his own apprehension, and which the Authorised Version has correctly translated. The Revised Version exhibits "*take away*" in the text and "*bear*" on the margin. One coming into our world to "*bear*" the sin of men would do so for the purpose of releasing them from *bearing* it themselves. This is the truth grasped by the prophet. The Lamb of God was to "*take*" all sin "*away*" by "*taking*" it *upon Himself*. John implied the latter and expressed the former. His thought rested on the end, while not forgetting the means. The process was overshadowed by the conspicuousness of the result. The "*bearing*" of sin was included in the representation of "*taking*" it "*away*."

§ 6. We shall now find it important to remember the place which the sacrificial lamb occupied in the elder economy, and to recollect that it is an existing institute in Jerusalem while John is “fulfilling his course.” Two slain lambs were offered every day, one in the morning and one in the evening.¹ Two additional lambs were offered every Sabbath-day.² Seven lambs were offered at the beginning of every month.³ Lambs were sacrificed at all the great national festivals. In the first month of the ecclesiastical year, answering very much to our April, a series of feasts commenced. On the fourteenth day was the Passover. A lamb was sacrificed in every household, and two households joined if one could not afford it.⁴ The next day a lamb was sacrificed at the waving of the first sheaf of early harvest.⁵ Seven weeks later was the feast of Pentecost. Nine lambs were sacrificed during the solemnities.⁶ The seventh month, corresponding generally to our September, opened with the feast of trumpets, which celebrated the commencement of the civil year. Seven lambs were sacrificed.⁷ The tenth day of the month was the great day of atonement. Seven lambs were sacrificed.⁸ On

¹ Exod. xxix. 38-41.

³ Num. xxviii. 11.

⁵ Lev. xxiii. 12.

⁷ Num. xxix. 2.

² Num. xxviii. 9-10.

⁴ Exod. xii. 3-5.

⁶ Lev. xxiii. 18-20.

⁸ Num. xxix. 8.

the fifteenth day of the month was the feast of tabernacles. For seven days running fourteen lambs were sacrificed, and seven on the eighth or last day.¹ All these sacrificial lambs were additional to the ordinary daily, weekly, and monthly offerings. Besides these there was a perpetual presentation of private offerings. A lamb might be a burnt-offering, a peace-offering, a sin-offering, or a trespass-offering. One lamb was prescribed at a purification after child-birth,² three lambs at the separation of the Nazarite,³ and three lambs at the cleansing of the leper.⁴ Lambs were sacrificed on great public occasions. A lamb was offered at the consecration of Aaron.⁵ Seventy-two lambs were offered at the dedication of the brazen altar in the wilderness.⁶ At the solemn crisis of Mizpeh Samuel offered a lamb.⁷ A thousand lambs were sacrificed at the coronation of Solomon.⁸ On the day of the restoration of ordinances under Hezekiak, two hundred and seven lambs were offered up.⁹ Thirty thousand lambs and kids were used to celebrate the Passover of Josiah, provided by the king.¹⁰ Many of these lambs did not constitute what are techni-

¹ Num. xxix. 12-40.

³ Num. vi. 12-14.

⁵ Lev. ix. 3.

⁷ 1 Sam. vii. 9.

⁹ 2 Chron. xxix. 21-32.

² Lev. xii. 6.

⁴ Lev. xiv. 10-20.

⁶ Num. vii. 87-88.

⁸ 1 Chron. xxix. 21.

¹⁰ 2 Chron. xxxv. 7.

cally called sin-offerings. A large number of them, however, were really sin-offerings in their essential nature, when not so classified according to Levitical definition. It would be impossible to prove that they were without expiatory or atoning import.

Every syllable of John's most wonderful sentence needs pondering. "*The Lamb*"—"The Lamb of God"—"The Lamb of God which taketh away sin"—"The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,"—each requires to be emphasised and studied. "The Lamb of God which *taketh away* sin" has already detained us, and is not the least significant element of the exclamation.

"*The Lamb.*" Is any one lamb distinctly recalled by the definite article? Two chiefly have been preferred by Biblical students—the paschal lamb¹ and the sin-bearing lamb in the great prophecy of Isaiah.² The lamb of the sin-offering and the lamb of the morning and evening sacrifice have

¹ So Luther; Grotius, Crit. Sac., *in loc.*; Lampe, Hofman, Olshausen, Hengstenberg, *in loc.*; and Christol., vol. ii. p. 330, and vol. iv. p. 351; Luthardt, *in loc.*; Cremer, Biblico-Theol. Lex., 2nd ed., art. *Αμνος*; Frischmuthi, Diss. de Agno Dei, Crit. Sac., Thesaur. Theol.-Phil., tom. ii. p. 365.

² So Erasmus, Crit. Sac., *in loc.*; Lücke, De Wette, Schaff's Lange, *in loc.*; Godet, Meyer, Alford, *in loc.*; Lange, Life of Christ, vol. ii. p. 278; Ellicott, *ibid.*, p. 116; Geikie, *ibid.*, vol. i. p. 459; Ebrard, Gosp. Hist., p. 209, &c. Bengel, Gnomon, undecided, but leaning to former reference.

been suggested by others,¹ but neither has been adopted so as to deserve more than a passing notice. The rationalistic dilutions of John's prophetic declaration, while not without an infinitesimal grain of truth, are now generally discarded.²

An adequate exegesis should take into its scope the whole truth common to all extant interpretations. That the prophecy of Isaiah could be absent from the mind of John was impossible. Prophetic utterances were the latest and brightest light of God shed by His Spirit on the obscurities of type, symbol, and rite. Later prophets were not neglectful of the words of their predecessors: One with a nature as intense as that of John, and who was likewise the conscious forerunner of the Messiah, could scarcely long withdraw his rapt gaze from the mirror of Old Testament prophecy. We know that the Baptist was a diligent student of the evangelical prophet. He saw himself and his work portrayed on the page of Isaiah. It would be absurd to suppose that he had not discerned the Great Personage of whom he was the chosen and anointed herald. But the sole conception which absorbed the thought of John in the prophetic de-

¹ Wetstein, Nov. Test., *in loc.*, adopts the latter. So Lightfoot, Heb. and Talmud. Exercitat., *in loc.*

² As Gabler, Kuinöl, Rosenmüller, and substantially Ewald.

lineation, when he pointed his disciples to Jesus, was the Sin-bearer. All else lay in the background. His apprehension is the exact reverse of rationalism, which perceives only meekness and gentleness symbolised in the Lamb, and is blind to the atoning function which rose in overshadowing significance to the mind of John.¹

But whence came the Sin-bearer to the vision of Isaiah? The whole atoning institute, illumined to his perception, provided the form and colour of his prophetic portraiture. He beheld before him the end and realisation of all sin-bearing. Could the expiatory element of the paschal lamb be excluded from his thoughts?

When our Saviour argued that "the Christ should suffer," He appealed to the whole "Scriptures"—"the Law of Moses, and the Prophets and the Psalms."² Only a very narrow treatment of the declaration of John could have divided commentators into two chief classes. It has been largely due to the imaginary requirement of the definite article. It is often most indefinite. Some one lamb is not pointed out. Speech is far more

¹ On the comprehensive and inclusive reference of "Lamb of God," *vide* Crawford's "Atonement," p. 45, and especially Cave's "Script. Doct. Sacrifice," pp. 273-274; Reynolds, "John the Baptist," 2nd ed., p. 369 *et seq.*, and Westcott, "Speaker's Comment.," *in loc.*

² Luke xxiv. 45-46.

recondite and occult than the rules which specify and enumerate grammatical usage are able to denote. The definite article sometimes represents allusions too manifold to be individualised, and far too subtle for minute and exact analysis. It often gathers and condenses numerous associations, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to select and exhibit which might be the most prominent in the group. The lamb of the Passover, of the morning and evening sacrifice, of sin-offering, of the great prophecy, each contributes its suggestion, and all converge their teaching, when we look upon Him marked out by the Baptist. "*The Lamb*" is parallel to "*the Son of Man*," "*the Son of God*," "*the Messiah*." Lambs to take away sin, sons of men, sons of God, messiahs, *i.e.*, anointed ones, were many. "*The Lamb*," "*the Son of Man*," "*the Son of God*," "*the Messiah*," while recalling no one in particular, represents and fulfils all. He is the *true* Lamb, just as He was "*the true bread*" and "*the true vine*."¹ Some of the Greek fathers justly applied to our Lord the suggested epithet.² "True" is not used here as the contrast of false, but as denoting substance in contrast with shadow

¹ John vi. 32; xv. 1.

² Τὸ ἀληθινὸν ἀρνίον.—*Macarius*. Τύπος ἦν τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ ἀμνοῦ Χριστοῦ.—*Chrysostom*. Suiceri, Thes. Eccl., vol. i. pp. 322–323.

and with lower embodiment.¹ The *true* Lamb is the Divine archetype and accomplished antitype of every typical lamb “slain from the foundation of the world.”² The lamb, no doubt, was selected from atoning ordinances in preference to any other victim, as the most appropriate symbol of moral character.

“Behold the Lamb *of God*.” The relation of the lamb to God is not sharply defined by this addition. Provided, appointed, approved of God, and acceptable to Him have been suggested. The first involves the rest. All must be true. Perhaps the first should have prominence.

The words of Abraham to Isaac offer a clue to the meaning of John. “God will provide Himself the lamb for the burnt-offering, my son.”³ Still more directly illustrative, and from the same Gospel, is the kindred phrase, “The bread of God.” “My Father,” said our Lord, “giveth you the true bread out of heaven : for the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven.”⁴ “The Lamb of God,” like the “bread of God,” is supernatural, is from above, proceeds immediately from God, and is

¹ Trench, *Synonyms*, *sub voce* Ἀληθινός.

² Die Realität der Idee, Meyer's Commentar. Evan. des Johannes, Kap. vi. 32, xv. 1.

³ Gen. xxii. 8.

⁴ John vi. 33.

His gift to men. "In this sacrifice it is not man who offers and sacrifices; it is God who gives, and gives of His own."¹ "God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all."² This is no transitory and typical lamb, but "*the Lamb*" in the Divine thought and purpose from the beginning.

"Which taketh away the *sin* of the *world*." Offerings in the past were for the sins of the covenant people. Redemption for the "*world*" is the burden of this great message. Josephus and Philo represented that the benefits of the daily sacrifice extended to the Gentiles as well as to the descendants of Abraham.³ The Apocrypha exhibits traces of similar teaching.⁴ The idea does not appear to have been favoured by the Rabbis, but the reverse.⁵ The announcement of the Baptist published a new and grand disclosure to that generation.

"*Sin* of the world," not *sins*, is the noteworthy proclamation of John. As one whole mass the sin of the world was borne, and borne away in the one expiation.⁶

¹ Godet, *in loc.*, vol. i. p. 423.

² Rom. viii. 32.

³ "Agnus sacrificii jugis offerebatur pro salute non Judæorum solum verum totius humani generis."—*Wetstein*, vol. i. p. 842.

⁴ 1 Maccab. xii. 11–12.

⁵ "Messias portat peccata *Israelitarum*."—Jakut Ruben, *ibid.*, p. 843.

⁶ "Die Sünden der Welt als eine *Gesammtheit* gedact."—*Meyer's Commentar*, *in loc.*

From whom did John receive the substance of his message? It is more than probable that it was from the Lord Himself. It is the manner of the Bible to give only the essential outlines of great events and transactions. Every student of Holy Scripture is placed under compulsion to realise for himself the particulars of occurrences only partially reported. It is one of the Divine methods for constraining the reconsideration of the inspired documents from age to age. Much must have transpired between our Saviour and the Baptist which has not been handed down. John's was "the baptism of repentance."¹ He taught, "I baptize you unto repentance," *i.e.*, to excite repentance.² All who repaired to him were "baptized of him . . . *confessing their sins.*"³ When Jesus presented Himself for baptism, John naturally hesitated. One weighty reason why John paused surely was that the immaculate Saviour could have no sins to confess. Confession of sins was incumbent on all to whom John administered the rite. The ordinary confession was impossible to Jesus. Yet sins had to be confessed, or the ordinance was a meaningless and hollow performance, and worse. The Lord must have confessed sin to John—the "sin of the world." John learned,

¹ Mark i. 4.² Matt. iii. 11.³ Matt. iii. 6.

either from the lips of Jesus Himself or from the Spirit of inspiration, that the confession of the "sin of the world" was the prelude to bearing and taking it away.

§ 8. It is important now to remind ourselves that the announcement of the Baptist was addressed by a Jew to Jews—by a Jew who, both through his father and his mother, was of the priestly line—a Jew who was a student of the Mosaic institutes—a Jew familiar with his national history—a Jew exercising his ministry with the sacrificial system going on before him—a Jew who was using words in a definite and specific sense, which the Divine training of at least one thousand five hundred years had fixed unalterably in the sacred language of the Old Testament Scriptures. If the hearers attached any signification at all to the proclamation of John, they must have understood that Jesus had come to be an atoning sacrifice. "*Behold the Lamb that taketh away sin*" could convey no other meaning.

It is not possible to say how far the disciples of John at the time understood the words of their master. It would not surprise us if they were an enigma which puzzled them for the moment, and then for a while were totally forgotten. If they had been

sympathetic and penetrating students of Holy Scripture, they would have comprehended the declaration of their teacher at once. Every one, unhappily, was looking for an earthly kingdom of might and splendour. A humbled and suffering Messiah, though depicted in the most vivid colours, could find no place in their thoughts, much less in their beliefs. Some of the most transparent statements of our Lord were absolute darkness to His disciples. If the adherents of John had expected a purely spiritual kingdom, undebased by worldly aims and agencies, and if there had been amongst them—as there would have been—an interpreter of the prophecies like Philip, who expounded Isaiah to the Ethiopian, our Lord's sacrifice and propitiation would have been at once perceived and welcomed by the followers of John as certainly as by the readers of St. Paul's epistles. When the Baptist's cry was heard, might have been, ought to have been, but was not the time to receive it. It is by no means certain that even John himself fully and permanently grasped the force of what he was informed and inspired to reveal. Often a prophet was lifted above his ordinary self when he saw and published the truth which an age needed, but which only inadequately realised its own want. It may justly be

suspected that "not unto" himself and his disciples at that moment, "but unto" a later day "did" he "minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Ghost sent forth from heaven." The message of John, like many a saying of the Lord Jesus, was without a particle of obscurity, either in its words, its allusions, or its discoveries, except to the dull apprehensions of the men who ought to have been waiting to embrace the glad tidings.

The time had not come. "The Lamb of God" was not the traditionary oblation, but a person. What a stupendous and baffling transition from an irrational quadruped to a living personality, and He the incarnation of the Ever-Blessed! The light will dawn in due season, but not yet.

CHAPTER V.

GOD'S OWN REVELATION OF HIMSELF AS ATONER.

“Vetus Testamentum recte intelligentibus prophetia est Novi Testamenti.”—ST. AUGUSTINE.

IT will now be our duty to *select and analyse a special institute, which may justly claim to be regarded as the Scriptural exposition of taking away sin by means of atonement.* Let it be the last sacrifice in the fourth chapter of Leviticus.¹ We direct attention to this offering simply because it is the presentation of *a lamb*, and it is a lamb *which takes away sin by making atonement.* In order to know what “*the Lamb which taketh away sin*” may be, it is first of all indispensable to ascertain what *lambs* are generally which take away sin. “*A lamb which taketh away sin*” will yield us the very information which we are in search of. No method of inquiry can be more natural, rational, and obligatory. Any other mode of in-

¹ Lev. iv. 32-35.

vestigation is vicious, and its issues must be false. Is Jesus "*the* Messiah"? Well, what are messiahs, viz., anointed persons? We are driven to the Old Testament to ask what *a* messiah is. Until we have discovered what anointed persons are, it is impossible to conjecture what "*the* Anointed" may be. By the same process we are to learn what is meant by "*the* Lamb *which* taketh away sin."

§ 1. It is most important in the present day that English Christians should understand the Mosaic offerings. Rationalists are explaining away our Redeemer's sacrifice for sin altogether, and ritualists are substituting the papal mass for the supper of our Lord. These extreme errors are working great mischief. The truth alone can correct these departures from the mind of God. But what is the truth in regard to this very grave matter? An intelligent and sufficient answer to this question must set forth the nature of the Levitical ordinance, and its fulfilment and uses under the evangelical economy. The facts in Leviticus to which we propose to appeal lie at the heart of this very serious inquiry.

Ponder for a short time man's relation to God under the former economy. There is little express

allusion, indeed, in the oldest portions of the Bible to a future state. It is so little that a few distinguished men have maintained that the Jews did not know of a life to come at all. The conclusion, however, is a hasty one, and cannot be sustained.

That the Jews were ignorant of a future life needs to be proved in a manner not up to this time attempted. The surmises of eccentric scholars and the assertions of a certain class of theologians, to whose speculations the opinion is a dogmatic necessity, fail to produce conviction. Belief in immortality was the common faith of the Eastern peoples. Not an echo of Hebrew scepticism has been caught and handed down in the canonical books. It is not till we reach the decadence of the national life that Sadduceeism emerges.

Those who hold that the Jews were unacquainted with a future state have not succeeded in vindicating the rationality of their persuasion. A nation of theists with developed religious sensibilities and destitute of any expectations of a life to come, is a moral impossibility. No human being enlightened by Old Testament teaching could believe in the personality of God, could feel himself amenable to Divine law, could absorb the spiritual nurture of the

theocracy, and could acquire the responsive conscience of a devout Hebrew—which was the most quickened and sensitive among the nations of antiquity—and at the same time suppress the conviction and anticipation of immortality.

As a matter of fact, the Old Testament training *did* evolve the most clear and intense faith in the after life of man to be found among the peoples of the old world. There is not the most slender evidence that it was derived from foreign influences. It was the proper fruit of their theocratic ordinances and discipline.

It ought not to surprise us that a future state should not obtain detailed prominence in a *typical* dispensation. The Mosaic economy was one entire and consistent symbol of a future judgment and a future life. Immortality did not need to be proclaimed any more than the existence of God. Both are taken for granted. A thoughtful student of the Bible would expect the great hereafter to be *typified* in a religion for human beings under the Old Testament, but would expect it to be *taught* in the New Testament in so far as additional light needed to be shed on things to come.

We are sometimes told that no motives were drawn from the life after death to influence the conduct of the men who figure in the Pentateuch.

That also needs to be proved. We altogether dispute the assertion. That the Hebrews were meant to find motives in the world to come, and that they did so, we have no manner of doubt. *Explicit* appeal to the world to come it would be difficult to find, and would be incongruous in a *typical* dispensation. *Implicit* appeal to the world to come is involved in every moment of existence under the theocracy, and must have been felt by all serious Hebrews because they were *men*—men *living under the spiritual government of God*.¹ Express resort to motives derived from the invisible world the essential nature as well as the typical character of the Mosaic system forbade.

§ 2. It is necessary to look still more closely into the relation of the covenant people to God. The Hebrews knew nothing of space. They had none of our science. To them God and the unseen world were just above the clouds. The earth was greater than the material heavens to their thought. The sky was a dome subservient to the world, provided with light and rain and beauty for man. God was ever an invisible presence amongst them. All their laws, political and ecclesiastical, moral

¹ See Bampton Lecture, Dean R. Payne Smith, D.D., pp. 192–193, 2nd. edit.

and spiritual, were dictated by God's own lips, and the Decalogue was engraven by His finger. He was their Ruler. Moses was only His representative, and, for that end, was in immediate communication with Him. The entire human life of the Hebrews was full of God. They could neither look, nor think, nor turn, much less act in any serious relations, without being touched by the influence and reminded of the nearness of Jehovah.

Alas! they got used to it, and lost the impression which awed them in the most affecting and solemn crises of their history. However blind and hardened any individuals became, as a nation they never doubted that God was the direct Author and Superintendent of every minute injunction and ordinance which made them differ from every other people.

In these circumstances, apart from the typical nature of the Mosaic economy, it was hardly to be expected that special appeals would be made to a life to come, when their whole life of sense was penetrated and encircled by the presence and activity of Jehovah. Their present life was a searching and crucial test for any future life. How they deported themselves under the one would most justly determine their relation to another. To have invoked echoes from the future

would have been to forsake the stronger motive and resort to the weaker. Anything which might have been said of hell and heaven would have been unnecessary and useless to men mingling in immediate death and life with their symbolic intimations, as the result of insensibility or faith, rebellion or obedience.

They were fed from heaven; they were consumed by fire; water was smitten for their thirst from the rock; fiery flying serpents destroyed them; amidst lightning and thunder and tempest Moses brought their law to them from Jehovah, and the supernatural splendour of conference with Divine majesty shone upon his countenance; and Aaron, though brother of Moses and high priest of the tribes, was not spared when he revolted against the authority of God in his representative, but was covered with leprosy. Plague and fire and earthquake swept away Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their seditious and schismatical followers.

§ 3. The Levitical sacrifices now claim our exclusive attention. We shall assume that the Pentateuch presents a veracious record of Divine Providence. An inquiry into the origin, history, and composition of the early books of Holy Scripture would be foreign to the aim of this treatise.

We remain convinced of their historical reliability. We shall avoid the discussion of many exceedingly interesting and most important questions; they do not come within the scope of our special purpose. We do not propose to ask, Who offered the first sacrifice? Were offerings presented in Paradise? Supposing that offerings began in Eden, what modification of primitive sacrificial worship came in with the Fall? What were the differences between the oldest historical sacrifices and those of the Mosaic ordinances? One question it is impossible to avoid, but we do not intend to pursue it. Was sacrifice at first prompted by man himself, or instituted by God? It has long been our persuasion that it must be traced to a Divine command, of which we have at present no record. We fail to discover the impulse in human nature out of which the practice of sacrifice could have originated.

Our immediate investigation is direct and simple, and needing no resort to conjecture. Under the Mosaic dispensation there were various kinds of offerings, both as to their material nature and religious design. There were numerous slain animals and different inanimate products. There were burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, sin-offerings, trespass-offerings, &c. All may be divided for

our purpose into two classes; not according to their material substance, but according to their religious quality and intention. These are offerings presented by men *in* the favour of God and by men *out of* the favour of God. If a man had broken revealed laws, he was out of favour, and the sin-offering or trespass-offering was the means to restore him to favour again. But a man who had broken no law brought a burnt-offering or a peace-offering at the dictate of voluntary piety. The sin- or trespass-offering acknowledged that the worshipper was out of favour, and was brought in accordance with explicit requirement. The burnt-offering or the peace-offering, on the contrary, was the spontaneous service of one in the Divine favour. Of course, these offerings of one in the favour of God always contained a propitiatory element, and distinctly recognised the involuntary evil which clings to a sinful creature.

We are concerned only with the sacrifice demanded by the law from Israelites who were out of the favour of God; that is, our theme is atoning sacrifice. We have to ask and answer the following questions: What is making atonement? What does atonement put away? What is it that effects atonement? What is the atoning act in sacrifice? Who was the atoner? What followed when an

atonement was not made, and what when it was made ?

§ 4. *What is making an atonement?* Our word “atonement” is a very unfortunate rendering of the original, but it is now impossible to alter it. Atone is formed of two English words—*at* and *one*. To make two persons who have disagreed *at one* is to *atone* them, namely, in the *current* English sense of the word, to *reconcile* them. This is not the meaning at all of the verb translated to “make atonement.” Reconciliation was always the effect of atonement in the Hebrew Church, and never atonement itself. The English origin of the word atonement must be forgotten, and we must attach to it the signification of the Hebrew word for which it stands. Those who reject our Lord’s proper sacrifice for sin, availing themselves of the composition of the term atonement, insist that reconciliation is its full equivalent, and comprises the whole of our Saviour’s redeeming work for men. At best, this expedient is only a transparent endeavour to filch the issue in dispute by putting a word upon the rack and coercing from it a meaning alien to the sacred text. Words wander far from their etymological sense. Their original force is often the very worst clue to their present usage. The

question still remains, "What saith the Scriptures?"

The verb כָּפַר, or more strictly כִּפֶּר, which we translate to "make atonement," is literally to *cover*, to *hide*, and in effect to render the *thing* covered *inoperative*, and therefore practically to *do away with* it. A figurative and ideal, and not a physical covering is intended. The classical text which sets forth this truth is as follows:—"The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to cover for your lives: for it is the blood that covereth by means of the life."¹

Kalisch gives the same sense to the words. The translation of the Authorised and Revised Versions is arbitrary. In the former the same word is rendered once "life" and twice "soul;" in the latter it is rendered "life" in the first and last instances, and "soul" in the second. This is to be regretted. The Revisers well knew that "soul" in its English sense is no equivalent for the original term: נֶפֶשׁ in Hebrew thought represented more than "life" and a great deal less than "soul." "Life" is our best approximate equivalent. The Speaker's Commentary has rendered "soul" in all three cases, which is consistent, but most misleading. "Soul," to English readers, means man's rational, moral, and

¹ Lev. xvii. 11.

immortal essence, but our Revisers use the word in a totally different sense. "The highest element in man, and which holds communion with God," the Speaker's Commentary excludes from the meaning of soul.¹ Then why not discard a term which gravely disguises the signification of the Hebrew text? The Authorised rendering of the last clause is indefensible. The Revised Version is accurate: "For it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life."² "For it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" is entirely mistaken. The rendering of the last clause, as in the Revised Version, is sustained by the latest and best scholarship.

§ 4.—II. *What does atonement put away?* In other words, what did the sacrificial transaction "*cover*," and so practically nullify and exterminate? Various answers have been returned to the question. The teaching of Holy Scripture is singularly clear

¹ The "soul" in Lev. xvii. 11 is that which is the seat of life in animal and man.

² This, too, is the rendering of Delitzsch, Keil, Kalisch, Von Gerlach, Speaker's Comment., *in loc.* So Bähr, Knobel, Fürst, Zunz, Herxheimer. Also Kurtz, *Sacrificial Worship*, Old Test., p. 71; Oehler, in Schaff's *Herzog*, p. 1687; Fairbairn's *Typol. Script.*, vol. ii. p. 305, 6th ed.; Cave's *Scrip. Doct. Sacrifice*, p. 100; Crawford, *Atonement*, p. 235; Schaff's *Lange*, *in loc.*; Hodge, *System. Theol.*, vol. ii. p. 501.

and explicit. It is *sin* that is *covered*, so as to lose its power to accuse and condemn the sinner.

When the object *covered* comes the most directly before the mind of an inspired writer, it is always the sin which sacrifice neutralises and renders innocuous. "And the priest shall *cover* for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned."¹ The important words literally are, "shall *cover* for him for his sin." "For him" represents the general purport of atonement. "For his sin" is the appositional and explanatory definition of the *exact and immediate object* of atonement, that is, the object *covered*. The ordinary meaning of the preposition rendered "for" and "as touching" is *upon, over*. Atonement is conceived of as a *covering* cast over the sinner, which, more *directly and specifically*, is *over his sin*. When the sinner seems to be the object covered, the sin is always the *real* object covered. "And the priest shall cover for him concerning the thing wherein he erred."² Here the literal words again are "shall *cover* for him for his error"—inadvertent transgression. The same identical formula occurs close at hand.³ Resembling expressions frequently recur.⁴ When persons or things are directly

¹ Lev. iv. 35.² Lev. v. 18.³ Lev. v. 13.⁴ Lev. iv. 26 ; v. 6, 10, &c.

covered, it is always the sin that is in the former or the defilement attributed to the latter which is the object covered and done away with. In devotional and prophetic phraseology, sin always appears as the *immediate* and *real* object. "As for our transgressions, Thou shalt purge them away," literally, *cover* them.¹ "Blessed is he whose sin is covered;" another verb to cover.² "One of the Seraphim . . . said . . . Thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin *purged*," literally, *covered*.³ On the margin it is correctly "*expiated*." A striking and decisive illustration of the Levitical formula may be seen in the law for the expiation of uncertain murder. "Forgive," literally, *cover*, "O Lord, Thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood to remain in the midst of Thy people Israel, and the blood shall be forgiven them," literally, "the blood shall be *covered* to them." "So shalt thou put away the innocent blood from the midst of thee."⁴ The blood, as representing murder, is the thing *covered*, and *covering* the blood of the innocent which has been shed is "*putting it away*," annulling and destroying it, so that it cries no more for penal retribu-

¹ Ps. lxxv. 3.

³ Isa. vi. 6, 7.

² Ps. xxxii 1.

⁴ Deut. xxi. 8, 9.

tion against Israel. This word, translated "*put away*," is a settled Deuteronomic formula, and signifies entire removal, practical annihilation. It occurs again in the same chapter: "And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die; so shalt thou *put away* the evil from the midst of thee."¹ So completely is the evil in this case put away, that the evil agent himself is rooted out of the land of the living. That it is the sin itself which is done away, and that to all practical intents it is indeed done away and obliterated, is a truth wrought into the Hebrew consciousness, and reappears in varied imagery. "I, even I, am He that *blotteth out* thy *transgressions*, and I *will not remember* thy *sins*."² "Thou hast cast *all* my *sins* behind Thy back."³ "He will *tread out* our *iniquities* *under foot*; and Thou wilt cast all their *sins* into the *depths* of the sea."⁴ "Saith the Lord, the *iniquity* of Israel shall be sought for, and there *shall be none*; and the *sins* of Judah, and *they shall not be found*."⁵ In another place the prophet prays, "Lord, *forgive not*," literally, *cover not*, "their iniquity, *neither blot out* their *sin* *from Thy sight*."⁶ That it is the sin which is *covered*, expiated, deprived of its power to accuse and con-

¹ Deut. xxi. 21.² Isa. xliii. 25.³ Isa. xxxviii. 17.⁴ Mic. vii. 19.⁵ Jer. l. 20.⁶ Jer. xviii. 23.

demn, is the consentient judgment of theologians, whether differing merely in secondary modes of apprehension or belonging to contrary schools of opinion.¹

§ 5.—III. *What is it that effects atonement?*

1. The most general reply is, the *sacrifice for sin covers* the sin, puts it away, practically abolishes it. “As is the sin-offering, so is the guilt-offering. There is one law for them: the priest maketh atonement,” *covereth*, “*therewith*.”² “The priest shall make atonement,” shall *cover*, “for him *with the ram* of the guilt-offering before the Lord for the sin which he hath sinned.”³ “The ram of the atonement, *whereby* atonement shall be made for him.”⁴ 2. But what is there in the sacrifice that atones, *covers*, expiates, puts away sin? It is the blood of the offering. The words are most explicit: “The life of the flesh is in *the blood*;

¹ Kurtz, *Sacrificial Worship*, Old Test., p. 67; Cave, *Script. Doct. Sacrifice*, pp. 482-486; Crawford, *Atonement*, p. 221; Kalisch, *Lev. i. 4*; Oehler, *Schaff's Herzog*, p. 1687; Hodge, *System. Theol.*, vol. ii. p. 502; Delitzsch, *Heb.*, vol. ii. p. 456; Bähr, Ebrard, Kliefoth, in Kurtz, p. 68; Von Gerlach, *Lev. i. 4*; Fairbairn, *Typol. Script.*, vol. ii. p. 305, 6th ed.; Smith's *Dict. Bible*, *sub voc.* “Sacrifice;” Alexander's *Kitto's Cyclop. Bibl. Lit.*, *sub voc.* “Atonement;” and an admirable article in Cremer's *Biblico-Theol. Lex.*, *sub voc.* ἱλασμοί.

² Lev. vii. 7.

³ Lev. xix. 22.

⁴ Num. v. 8.

and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement," *to cover* . . . "for it is *the blood* that *maketh atonement*," *covereth*.¹ That the blood was the means of atonement is abundantly exhibited. "And Aaron shall make atonement," shall *cover*, "*with the blood* of the sin-offering of atonement," literally, *coverings*.² "No sin-offering, whereof any of *the blood* is brought into the tent of meeting to *make atonement*," *to cover*.³ "And Moses took *the blood*, and put it upon the horns of the altar . . . *to make atonement*," *to cover*.⁴ "*To make atonement*," in the two last quotations, is the translation of the Revised Version. The Authorised Version renders "*to reconcile*" in the first instance, and "*to make reconciliation*" in the second. It should be distinctly and carefully noted that "*reconcile*" and "*reconciliation*" in the Authorised Version were not used in their *modern* and *current* sense. In our older tongue they were synonyms for *atonement* in its strict and Biblical force of *expiate* and *expiation*, namely, the obliteration of sin by sacrifice. In one place in the Authorised Version of the New Testament it is used in its older signification.⁵ Reconciliation is there the equivalent of atonement, expiation, pro-

¹ Lev. xvii. 11.² Exod. xxx. 10.³ Lev. vi. 30.⁴ Lev. viii. 15.⁵ Heb. ii. 17.

pitiation, and their synonyms. The Revised Version has rightly substituted "*propitiation*" for the modern reader. Instead of attempting to reduce the Scriptural significance of atonement to the current sense attached to reconciliation, as is the endeavour of some, it would be far wiser to reinstate reconciliation as the equivalent of expiation and propitiation. 3. A further and most important question remains. What was the atoning property in the blood? Was it the material liquid itself which effected expiation and put away sin? Most certainly not. The terms of the *locus classicus* are decisive. "The blood *maketh atonement*," "*covereth by means*," or by reason, "*of the life*."¹ The doctrine of this text is all the more impressive because it is incidental, and assumes as known by every one that it is the blood which makes atonement, and that "*through the life*." It was not the design of the cited text to set forth the means of atonement. Its aim is to enforce an old law against eating blood by presenting a new motive and a fresh sanction. "Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."² The law was published immediately after the Flood. No constituent of the animal frame is so closely connected with the life as the

¹ Lev. xvii. 10-11.

² Gen. ix. 4.

blood. The near relation of life to the blood seems to be the reason of the original prohibition. Life is sacred. Blood is the bearer of life, and is selected to stand for life itself. It is in accordance with the manner of the Bible to re-announce an old law coupled with an additional motive and a later sanction, without disturbing the earlier foundation on which it reposes. The Sabbath was at first connected with the rest which closed creation. Long after it was republished as a part of the Decalogue, and deliverance from Egypt was annexed as an appeal to Hebrew gratitude to bind the tribes to preserve the sacred day from secular profanation. 4. One more question must be asked. How did the blood, regarded as the seat of life, avail to atone, to *cover*, to do away with the *sin* of the transgressor? The transaction was in some way the substitution of life for life. The blood of the animal, which is its life *in compendio*, was offered for the forfeited life of the sinner. The core of all atoning sacrifice is life for life. The substitution of animal life for human life is the essence of sin-offering. To call the assertion that the offering for sin was the surrendering of life for life a *theory* of sacrifice is an absurd misapplication of terms. On the contrary, it is merely a transparent recital of enacted facts.

We have no *theory* of atonement, either in the sense of hypothesis or accepted scientific explanation. We have no speculations to offer. To deny that atonement is the substitution of life for life is not to reject *our theory*, but a blank refusal to accept the palpable reality as detailed in the record.

The substitution of the life of an animal for the life of a man was so universally understood, that an assertion of the fact cannot rationally be expected. Still less should we look for an exposition of the principle. It is implied with greater or less distinctness in all atoning offerings. It could be only incidentally or in very peculiar circumstances that this truth could receive direct or independent expression. Abraham was familiar with it. He "took the ram and offered him up for a burnt-offering *in the stead* of his son."¹ The substitution of animal for human life was so usually practised, that in certain special cases it was strictly prohibited as inadmissible. It was not permitted to the wilful murderer. "Blood polluteth the land, and no expiation can be made for the land for the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it."² "No expiation can be made," literally is, it cannot be *covered*. The wilful mur-

¹ Gen. xxii. 13, תָּחֵת.

² Num. xxxv. 33.

derer could make atonement only in his own person. His own blood was the covering, the expiation, of the blood which he had shed. The law of uncertain murder, cited already, is in some respects the contrast of the law of wilful murder. It prescribed and enjoined a species of animal substitution.¹

The Catholic doctrine of Christendom, that the sin-offering was penal and vicarious, is amply vindicated by the latest scholars who have written on sacrifice. Referring to the important text which we have had occasion more than once to cite,² Kalisch says, "The words express clearly the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice."³ The standpoint of Kalisch leaves him unembarrassed by the dogmatic necessities of sentimental rationalism. The theory of a well-known writer, which excludes the idea of substitution from the sin-offering, Kalisch justly asserts was "*prompted by aversion to the doctrine of vicariousness.*"⁴ Still more weighty is the decision of Kurtz: "The *juridical interpretation* of the Old Testament sacrifice, in which the slaying is regarded as a *pœna vicaria*, endured by the sacrificial animal in the stead of the person offering it, has been the one generally received from the time

¹ Deut. xxi. 1-9.

³ Levit., vol. ii. p. 349.

² Lev. xvii. 11.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 124.

of the Rabbins and the Fathers, at least so far as the sin-offerings and trespass-offerings are concerned; and even in the most recent time it has found many supporters"—he refers, of course, to Germany. "*Among these are Gesenius, De Wette, Winer, Hengstenberg, Scholl, Bruno-Bauer, Von Meyer, Hävernicks, Lange, Thalhoffer, Stöckl, Tholuck, Ebrard, Knobel, Kliefoth, Keil, Thomasius and Kahnis.*"¹ Schaff's Lange should be quoted: "The vicarious character of the atonement effected by means of the sacrifices is clearly brought out; the soul, the $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$, the principle of animal life, is in the blood, and for that reason the 'soul' of animals was given to man to make an atonement for his own 'soul;' by the giving up of the life of the animal the life of man was spared."² "As God appears," wrote the late Principal Fairbairn, "in the institution of sacrifice . . . He mercifully appoints a substitute—the soul or life of a beast for the soul or life of the transgressor; and as the seat of life is in the blood, so the blood of the beast, its life-blood, was given to be shed in death . . . in the room of that other and higher but guilty life."³ "Life was given for life," affirms Professor Crawford, "the life of the victim for the

¹ *Sacr. Wor., Old Test.*, p. 123.

² Under Lev. xvii. 11.

³ *Typol. Script.*, vol. ii. p. 306, 6th ed.

life of the offerer.”¹ Equally clear is the statement of Professor Cave: “The blood of every animal sacrifice” was “appointed by God as a means of atonement for a human life, because that blood itself is the very life of the animal sacrificed. ‘Life for life’ is the motto of blood sacrifice, and wherever blood is shed atonement is made.”² Among the conclusions adopted by Tholuck, the following may be noted: “The idea of the substitution of a sacrificial animal for the guilty was prevalent through all antiquity.” “The propitiatory sacrifice represented the punishment which the sinner had merited, and thus awakened in sinners the consciousness of guilt.” “The verb *כִּפֶּר*, to *atone*, *propitiate*,” to *cover*, “includes the idea of *substitution*.”³ The sentences of Hengstenberg deserve pondering. “Sin-offerings were vicarious, substitutionary.” “The theology of the Church has in all ages assumed that sacrifices bore a substitutionary character. Where it has been denied, traces may invariably be detected of some sort of a bias leading to the denial.” “That which distinguishes the Church from the world is the blood of atonement.”⁴ Dr. Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible bears a like

¹ Atonement, p. 219.

² Script. Doct. Sacrifice, p. 100.

³ Heb., vol. ii. pp. 257-259.

⁴ Sacrifices of Holy Script., pp. 378, 379, 387.

testimony. "Beyond all doubt the sin-offering distinctly witnessed that sin existed in man, that the 'wages of that sin was death,' and that God had provided an atonement by the vicarious suffering of an appointed victim."¹ Oehler, while not accepting the full teaching of Holy Scripture, confesses, "The juridical idea, that the victim in the Mosaic sacrifices took the place of the sinner, and suffered vicariously, *is certainly found in Isa. liii., and seems to be taught in Deut. xxi. 1-9, &c.*"² Still more remarkable is the candid admission of Delitzsch, whose views approach the most nearly to the Biblical conception: "*It cannot be denied that the juridical view is not only the most simple and intelligible, but also the idea which harmonises best with the New Testament Antitype.*"³ That which "is certainly found in Isaiah," and which "harmonises best with the New Testament Antitype," was not likely to be absent from the type, and needs no more satisfactory and Scriptural vindication. The testimony gathered together in this section to the vicarious nature of the Levitical sacrifice represents all schools of thought. Evidence so consentient would be difficult to cite in support of any other Scriptural doctrine.

¹ *Sub voc.* "Sacrifice."

² Schaff's Herzog, *sub voc.* "Offerings."

³ Heb., vol. ii. p. 454.

§ 6.—IV. *What is THE atoning act in sacrifice?* The blood of atoning sacrifices was put in different manners on the altar. As the decisive text repeatedly cited from Leviticus sets forth, it is “*upon the altar*” that the blood of sacrifice avails.¹ The reasons are not far to seek. The scene of worship is “the tent of meeting,” namely, the place of meeting between God and man. It is unfortunately rendered in the Authorised Version “the tabernacle of the congregation.” The Revised Version has corrected the error. “There will I meet with the children of Israel” was the divine promise to Moses before “the tent of meeting” was erected.² It was from “out of the tent of meeting” that the Levitical ordinances were promulgated by the voice of God Himself.³ In its “holy of holies” the symbol of the Divine presence shone. The altar belonged to God. It stood within His courts. It fronted His dwelling-place. There He met the suppliant. What was brought and presented there according to revealed prescription was received by Him to whom the altar was reared and dedicated. Beside the altar of burnt-offering was the nearest and most solemn approach to God possible to the lay worshipper. The formulæ of burnt-offering, peace-offering, sin-offering, and trespass-offering

¹ Lev. xvii. 11.² Exod. xxix. 43.³ Lev. i. 1.

reiterate that the sacrifice was “unto the Lord;” that the whole sacrificial transaction was “before the Lord,” and “before the Lord” atonement was effected.¹ Two things were certified when blood was put upon the altar, namely, a life was actually offered up, and was really accepted for the forfeited life of the sacrificer. Placing the blood upon the altar was the *real*, the *only*, and the *completed* atoning act. All else was preparatory and accessory. “The sprinkling of blood had this paramount significance in expiatory offerings.” “In expiatory offerings not the killing of the animal, but the proceeding with the blood was the principal act which effected atonement.”² “The acme of the sacrifice in question”—the sin-offering—“undeniably lay in the aspersion of blood upon the altar,—the presentation, so to speak, of the atoning life before the Lord.”³ “The atonement, in the strict and proper sense, was made when the penalty of death was inflicted on the victim *and its blood sprinkled on the altar of God*. This denoted that its life-blood was not only given, *but also accepted by God*, in the room of the sinful.”⁴ Further citation under this section is unnecessary.

¹ Lev. i. 2-3 ; iii. 1, 5 ; iv. 3-4 ; v. 15 ; xix. 22, &c.

² Kalisch, Levit., vol. i. pp. 125, 294.

³ Cave, Script. Doct. Sacrifice, p. 129.

⁴ Fairbairn, Typol. Script., vol. ii. p. 339, 6th edit.

§ 7.—V. *Who was the Atoner?* Who covered sin and disarmed it of its power to arraign and convict? *God—God only.* True, atonement was effected through an official priesthood. Israel was a sacerdotal people. Moses was commanded to pronounce them “a kingdom of priests and an holy” or consecrated “nation.”¹ But the people shrank in fear from approaching God for themselves; so the Levites were set apart for the Divine service, and Aaron and his descendants were the anointed priests. They were, therefore, the selected and ordained representatives of the priestly nation. This agrees with the inspired definition of the priestly function. “Every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.”² It is added of our Saviour, “Wherefore it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”³ Who called the priestly nation? Who appointed the representative priesthood? Who prescribed the sacerdotal functions? Who determined the minute particulars of every offering? Who arranged the details of sacrificial ritual? Who

¹ Exod. xix. 6.² Heb. v. 1.³ Heb. ii. 17.

instituted atonement in all the modes under which it was effected? But one answer is possible. *God*—*God only*. Though Jesus Christ is the appointed Mediator of salvation, the Gospel is the self-revelation of God as Saviour. As such He often bears that name in Holy Scripture. So propitiation effected through the instrumentality of the Aaronic priesthood was the self-revelation of God as Atoner.

It is important to mark the difference between the Pagan and the Biblical propitiation. The heathen regarded the Deity as alienated from them in nature and feeling.¹ That is the inevitable verdict of the human conscience without the revealed mercy of God. Hence their sacrifices were intended to change the sentiment of the god in their favour. The truth is, that the feeling of God has always been on our side. He has never needed alteration, and is incapable of it. His compassion has ever flowed forth towards men in their evil and because they are evil. But it is impossible to the nature of God to pass by sin as though it had never been committed. There must be either personal suffering or vicarious sacrifice. The penalty must be endured, or there must be the sin-offering instead. God of His own spontaneous and gracious prompting enacted atonement. Expiation is His

¹ See Cremer's *Biblico-Theol. Lex. sub voc.* ἱλάσκομαι, 2nd edit.

own method and His own Divine ordinance. God Himself is the great Atoner. Hence the decisive and published assurance, "The life of the flesh is in the blood: AND I HAVE GIVEN IT TO YOU UPON THE ALTAR, to make atonement for your lives."¹ On this account, when sinners cry that their sins may be blotted out, it is to God to whom they appeal. Psalmists and prophets, speaking for God, ascribe all covering and cancelling of sin to the volition, the prerogative, the grace of the Almighty.

Unbelief has not infrequently sneered at the doctrine of propitiation, because God both *provides* and *accepts* the atonement. The difficulty is a larger one than the scorner is aware of. What religious thought, feeling, or deed is there that does not proceed *first* in some form *from* God and *then* pass back to God? It is inevitable to the unique relation of the Creator to the creature, the Redeemer to the redeemed, and the worshipper to the Worshipped. Is prayer altogether without God? All devout souls will confess that it is poor prayer which is unbegotten by God and is only offered to Him. It could never reach Him. It could not be admitted. God the Atoner, God the holy and merciful, both instituted, admits, and ratifies atonement.

¹ Lev. xvii. 11.

§ 8.—VI. *What followed when an atonement was not made, and what when it was made?* When no atonement was effected, the broken law disturbed the mind of the transgressor. As soon as pollution was incurred or wrong was done, if it were known, the transgressor was severed from society, from business, and from the sanctuary. If he wilfully profaned the revealed ordinances, he was cut off from among the living. The law pursued its course, and its extreme penalty was endured.

When an atonement was made, that is, when the sin was covered and to all intents and purposes done away with, the sinner who had offered sacrifice went forth from the court of the tent of meeting, and he was reinstated in all the relations of life. He was harmonised with the laws which he had broken and which were against him. He was restored, as we should say, to the home, the church, the market. Hence we read, “And the priest shall make atonement for him . . . and he shall be forgiven.”¹ So you perceive that atonement, the covering or expiation of sin, is one thing, and forgiveness is another and a very different thing. Atonement goes before forgiveness. Without atonement forgiveness was unattainable under the Levitical system.

¹ Lev. iv. 35.

What underlies this procedure? The fundamental truth is obvious. Our earthly life is intrusted to us by God on very definite and settled conditions. Sin forfeits the life committed to us. Transgressors are unworthy of its uses and enjoyments. The simplest and fullest expression of the Divine law occurs incidentally. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."¹ Its earliest historical embodiment is connected with the first test of obedience. "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."² St. Paul has given the last its most abstract and unrestricted enunciation: "The wages of sin is death."³ But he is not content to proclaim the law as a fact. He sets forth the penalty as the natural desert of the sinner. The figure is "wages"—that which has been earned and is justly merited. In the previous chapter cited he bore testimony no less explicitly to the historical reality to which we have appealed. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin."⁴ Death is the earthly punishment of sin, and the vague and portentous symbol of the larger and remoter consequences of evil which cast their deep shadows upon the conscience from the eternal world.

¹ Ezek. xviii. 4, 20.

³ Rom. vi. 23.

² Gen. ii. 17.

⁴ Rom. v. 12.

The death of the animal victim for the transgressing man was a standing memorial of the two great truths which underlie all practical religious sentiment and are the chief factors in practical religious life. These are—the desert of sin and a dispensation of grace. “Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission”¹ solemnly declared the New Testament expositor of the Mosaic ritual. It is only putting the same thought in other words to say that the atoning or propitiatory sacrifice was the abiding monument of the unswerving holiness and the tender mercy of God.

God must either *cover* sin or *punish* it. I commend to your particular study a remarkable passage of the Divine Word which sums up in one practical sentence the results of our whole inquiry: “But He, being full of compassion, *covered* their iniquity, and *destroyed them not*: yea, many a time *turned He His anger away*, and did not *stir up all His wrath*.”² How plainly the *covering of iniquity* must go before the *withholding of the merited destruction*! How obvious, too, as inwrought into the whole atoning institute, that *the covering of iniquity* is the practical equivalent of

¹ Heb. ix. 22.

² Psalm lxxviii. 38: “Forgave their iniquity.”—*Auth. and Rev. Version.*

the turning away of anger! Sin, as such, must arouse the wrath of God. Sin cannot be ignored and cannot be annihilated, but its ability to come between us and God to accuse and condemn can be annulled. The Bible reveals but one mode of effecting this great human need—*atonement*. A Scriptural atonement is a covering for sin—interposing something which neutralises its power to awaken Divine wrath, and which warrants the turning of Divine anger away. What that was to the Hebrew has been amply detailed.

We close this section of our study by reminding the reader, as suggested already in passing, that the presentation of blood and the atoning formulæ belong to the voluntary offerings of worshippers in the Divine favour, as well as to the sin-offering required of the transgressor. The reason is obvious. The sense of sin blended with the gratitude of the faithful in their spontaneous acts of worship.

CHAPTER VI.

FULFILMENTS AND USES UNDER THE CHRISTIAN ECONOMY.

“Et in Vetere, Novum lateat, et in Novo Vetus pateat.”—
AUGUSTINE.

“I am bound to confess that the further my studies have extended, the more clearly have I seen that the religion of the Old Testament and the Gospel constitute one Revelation, and the higher has been my consequent estimate of the loftiness and depth of the Jewish economy.”—THOLUCK.

WE propose now to seek the Christian fulfilments and uses of the Levitical sacrifice. The Levitical offering was instituted at first for the benefit of Israel. The Jews, however, received nothing which was simply and exclusively for themselves. While real privileges were conferred on them, their vocation was a service for the world. The promise even to Abraham was “In thee shall *all the families of the earth* be blessed.”¹ It is equally true of the priests as it was of the prophets, “That not *unto*

¹ Gen. xii. 3.

themselves, but *unto you* did they minister these things, which *now* have been announced unto you through them that preached the Gospel unto you by the Holy Ghost sent forth from heaven.”¹ Abraham and Moses, Egypt, the wilderness and Canaan, mean more to us than to contemporary Hebrews.

In the secular as well as in the spiritual sphere, the great law of progress necessitates that past generations shall know less of themselves than the future shall know of them. In physical details, and in the minute circumstances and accidents of life and experience, the present can see what has gone by but very dimly. But the broad significance of historic epochs and developments cannot be apprehended by those who move amidst them. The lessons can be read in full by posterity only. Everything in a past age, adequately reported, acquires a larger meaning to the eyes of every succeeding age. Egypt, Assyria, Greece, and Rome yield us more profound instruction than they did to their own sons. The same law is visible in the annals of the Hebrews. They were the chosen depository of a Divine revelation, but, in accordance with the historic law, they have left us a richer bequest of truth than that which they themselves

¹ 1 Pet. i. 12.

comprehended and enjoyed. The reason has been already assigned. God is unfolding a progressive design, extending through all history, secular and sacred. In the latter the process is more palpable, because more distinctly published and more abundantly illustrated. We ought, therefore, on all truly rational grounds, to expect the Levitical sacrifice to render to us a higher service than it did to Israel. But alas! plenty of religious teachers seem to have entered into a conspiracy to ignore it. Some pervert and degrade it. Others slander and then repudiate and despise it. God is now using these various styles of human crookedness to compel men to go back to His truth.

§ 1.—I. *The general utility of the Levitical sacrifice under the Gospel.* One great value of the sin-offering is that by its means sense is made a help to faith. The Gospel, we need scarcely emphasise, is a spiritual system; but even it employs external and material symbols to aid inward and spiritual apprehensions. The Lord's Supper is distinctly an ordinance of this kind. The great congregation, and all its visible and audible exercises, assist the religious life of the true and devout worshipper.

A great many persons have only a very hazy

discernment of the nature and conditions of Divine forgiveness. An objective transaction which dramatises the fact to sense is assistance of very great worth. Many, who have a generally correct understanding of the revealed method of salvation, yet do not seem capable of receiving pardon by a simple act of simple faith, and of entering at once into the conscious favour of God. Many evangelical Christians, in consequence, have a very sunless religion. Some, who have but little acquaintance with Biblical truth, are seeking rest in the High Anglican and Romish confessional. They are turning for certitude to the absolving word of a priest, instead of reposing their trust in the absolving word and ordinance of the invisible but ever-present Divinity. We are convinced that all the help which is needed by many is to be derived from a thorough study of the Mosaic sacrifice. Words in constant use in all religious services are without any definite and valuable meaning to tens of thousands of people, which would acquire intellectual substance and spiritual power if their Levitical force were understood by Christian congregations. All the writers of the New Testament felt the life of the words which often glide from modern lips without any realisation of their significance and worth.

There is this great and peculiar value in the ancient offering for sin, that it belongs to the past, and its current use has long ceased among men. It possesses all the advantages of a sensuous aid to faith without its disadvantages. A sensuous ritual, in the present, will become sensuous only to multitudes; and while it may assist the religious life of the few, it will not, as a rule, refine and etherealise even their faith. But the spiritual life begotten by the Gospel of Christ, not coveting, but rather deprecating sensuous instrumentalities, will invigorate faith without carnalising it, and will impart body and substance to religious apprehensions by receiving into its service the types of an economy left far behind in the distant past. While once belonging to the world of sense, they belong to it no more. History has transferred them to the world of ideas. They have become the transfigured instruments and auxiliaries of enlightened and spiritual religion.

§ 2.—II. *The special teaching and value of the Levitical sacrifice for Christian men.* We saw in an earlier chapter that our knowledge of God, while real and trustworthy, is analogical. God is not known to us directly, but through ordinances designed to reveal Him to us. For example, God is

our "Lawgiver," our "Judge," our "King."¹ But suppose that our connections and needs, as human beings, had never developed the office of chief magistrate and moral ruler. Imagine that human character were so perfect and human life so simple that our reason and want never required us to organise a scheme of civil and judicial administration. We can figure to our minds such a state of things; but to human beings so situated and so circumstanced what good would it be to tell them that God is their Lawgiver, their Judge, their King? Clearly none whatever. The words would convey no kind of meaning to them. God is "our Father." But conceive that we had been created as independent individuals, without progenitors, without descent, without the ties of race and family. This seems to be the condition of the angels. Hence the "angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation,"² seem to have been without an original ancestor, and fell as individuals. To announce to beings without the bonds of race and family relationships that God is their Father would be utterly useless. The word would be destitute of signification. If parenthood had no existence amongst us, it would lie beyond the range of our comprehension. To say

¹ Isa. xxxiii. 22.² Jude 6.

to such creatures as we have defined, "God is your Lawgiver, your Judge, and your King, God is your Father," would impart no kind of information. The terms employed would be merely arbitrary symbols of unknown attributes. But such is not our state. God has instituted amongst us the natural ordinance of parent and the rational ordinance of civil and moral rulership. In Holy Scripture both are set forth as equally proceeding from God, and as alike symbolical of His attributes and His relationships to men. Parenthood and magistracy were predetermined in order that God might be able to proclaim through His inspired servants, I am your "Father," your "Lawgiver," your "Judge," your "King."

But Father, Lawgiver, Judge, King, do not unveil all that God wishes to disclose to us of Himself, nor all that we require to know of Him. God is the Atoner. No ordinance in creation, and no ordinance necessitated by human relationships, could unfold this aspect of the Divine nature and attributes. The Levitical priesthood and the Levitical sacrifice are the sole Divine and authoritative exponents of the Atoner for all nations. The most momentous revelation of God with which we have been favoured is that of Atoner. The Father was first displayed in the fact that "God created

man in His own image.”¹ With the growth and arrangements of human society arose moral rulership. The last grand self-disclosure of God was the Atoner. The Hebrew nationality was chosen out of the old world to be the medium of its exhibition to all peoples. The attributes denoted on the one hand by the Father, and on the other by the Lawgiver, the Judge, and the King, unite in the Atoner.

Hence the Forerunner cried, as Jesus entered on His ministry, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Our blessed Lord, at the close of His mission, anticipating death on the morrow, having eaten of the Paschal sacrifice, and in the act of instituting the Holy Supper, said, “This is My blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins.” Christ, St. Paul avers, “through His own blood entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.” Again, Him “God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood.” Further, “Having made peace through the blood of His cross.” St. John says, “He is the propitiation for our sins.” St. Paul exhorts the Ephesian elders, “Feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.” St. Peter tells his

¹ Gen. i. 27.

readers, "Ye were redeemed with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." St. Paul reiterates: "We have our redemption through His blood." "Justified by His blood." "The blood of Christ shall cleanse your conscience from dead works." St. John sets forth that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." In the Apocalypse, Jesus Christ is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The cry of the Church below is, "Unto Him that loosed us from our sins by His blood . . . to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever." "The Church above washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "Worthy art Thou," is their song; "for Thou didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation." "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing."¹

No assertions of the Word of God announce a Divine Father and a Divine Lawgiver, Judge, and King more explicitly than these citations imply

¹ Matt. xxvi. 28; Heb. ix. 12; Rom. iii. 25; Col. i. 20; 1 John ii. 2; Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. i. 19; Eph. i. 7; Rom. v. 9; Heb. ix. 14; 1 John i. 7; Rev. xiii. 8; Rev. i. 5-6; vii. 14; v. 9; v. 12.

and declare a Divine Atoner by the blood of sacrifice.

§ 3. *The sphere of atonement under both economies.*

The Mosaic dispensation was a precious disclosure of God adapted to the deepest religious needs of men. Tholuck confessed that the more he studied the Old Testament, the "higher" was his "estimate" of the "loftiness and depth of the Jewish economy."¹ We are increasingly persuaded that if any one fails to discern the profound spirituality of the Old Testament revelation, he has altogether misapprehended its nature. The existence of the Hebrew Psalter ought to be a sufficient rebuke of the notion that the Levitical ordinances were *nothing but ceremonial shadows of a future dispensation*. The Mosaic services were beyond all doubt typical and predictive, but at the same time they afforded the symbols and the sacraments of a present and a spiritual religion, the essential meaning of which was apparent to every devout worshipper at the "tent of meeting."

But while the elder economy provided in sensuous forms the means and aids of an immediate and spiritual worship for the men who lived amidst

¹ Sermon on the Mount, Preface.

its observances, its value to us is incapable of exaggeration. Since God is Atoner alike in the Mosaic and Christian ages, is the sphere of atonement the same in both dispensations? No question of equal importance could be asked at this stage of our inquiry. It goes to the root of the chief truth which we are pursuing. The sphere of atonement can be but one, namely, the sphere of God's spiritual relations towards man, and of man's spiritual relations towards God.

But while atonement must transpire in the sphere of spiritual relations, other relations may be begotten of a temporary and educational kind, and introduced into the sphere of spiritual relations. In the Hebrew dispensation, for example, God was the unseen Lawgiver and King of Israel, and the tribes were His subjects, both in their civil and ecclesiastical relations. Not a few, in consequence, have taught that the Levitical atonement availed no farther than to restore the transgressing Jew to the favour of Jehovah as the invisible Ruler and Head of the theocratic nation. Such conceive that the ancient sacrifice accomplished nothing for the Hebrew worshipper in his chief relationships towards God as a guilty and immortal creature. The Hebrew atonement, according to this conception, was simply and solely predictive of the Chris-

tian propitiation, and afforded no religious succour to the conscience-stricken son of Abraham. To him it was only dumb show without any immediate value.

This interpretation of the Hebrew ritual is indefensible. It is oblivious to the fact that Jehovah was *God* and the Hebrews were *men*. It does not take into account that, to a Jew, the civil, the ceremonial, and the spiritual formed one revelation and one code. These triple elements were organically inseparable, and were of co-ordinate authority. This low construction of the purport of Hebrew ordinances ascribes to the ancient sacrificer a mental process impossible to any soul. No human being could deal with God through acts of profound solemnity and restrict the operation of heart and conscience to the conception of the unseen Author of the civil and ecclesiastical legislation, and prohibit their contact with the Creator of the world, the Father of spirits and the Judge of men. From whatever need, and through whatever experience the soul approaches God, it is to God in His entire being and in all His known relations to whom the soul repairs, and the whole man enters into the act. An atonement which was only ceremonial and not religious is simply a mental impossibility to a spiritual man.

Moreover, the Mosaic economy could neither have been a revelation of God nor could have provided a religion for man if it had totally ignored the immediate spiritual needs of the soul. A more tremendous indictment of the Old Testament cultus could scarcely be advanced. When St. Paul denied any real or causative efficacy to the Mosaic oblation, it never entered his intention to disparage its symbolic and sacramental worth to a spiritual Hebrew. While *not inherently*, it was *institutionally* and *instrumentally* spiritual to a believing man.

The radical distinction between the Mosaic and Christian system is, not that the latter is wholly spiritual in nature and aim, and the former not spiritual at all. The Levitical atonement was *symbolical*, the Christian is *real*; the former was *typical*, the latter is *actual*; the one was *sensuous* in *external form*, the other predominantly *spiritual* even in *mode*. The New Testament sacrifice is not spiritual by exclusion, but by contrast and in pre-eminence.

To what extent the Hebrew was troubled and perplexed by a symbolical and insufficient atonement, and how far he suspected that some greater atonement was treasured in the future, we are very much in the dark. The devotional parts of the

Bible do not throw much light on the inquiry. Judging from them, we should say that the Evangelical atonement was little foreseen. Through the unexplained mystery of an animal sacrifice the faith of a devout Jew reached the holy mercy of God and rested in its consolation.

The student of Old Testament life, and the close observer of religious feeling round about him, will make one impressive and suggestive discovery. The ritual system created a religious sentiment of a moral and spiritual quality which only atonement ever evolves. It is utterly different in tone, depth, and colouring from that which any speculations develop, which, on principle, reject the idea of a propitiatory sacrifice. Practical religion always takes its rise in individual conviction of sin. But the sense of sin is a very different thing in different people. Sin must be a trivial thing in the universe, and a peccadillo in behaviour, to one who thinks that transgression can be forgiven and its guilt cancelled by a mere breath of fatherly indulgence. But the man who sees in the sacrifice the desert of sin, and in propitiation the indispensable antecedent to pardon, and who deeply feels the need of a Divine and Atoning Saviour, develops another and a totally dissimilar moral consciousness. To him sin is necessarily a stupen-

dous evil, its existence a fact of tremendous gravity, and pardon not a result so facile that a mere word can alter it, and its guilt not so inconsiderable a difficulty that a mere volition can dismiss it.

A man's religion which abjures propitiation, and a man's religion derived from faith in propitiation, are religions dissimilar in their moral origins, qualities, and issues. One who has acquired his practical estimate of the evil of sin from the catholic doctrine of atonement may withdraw his allegiance from this cardinal article of the faith, and yet retain very much the sense of sin begotten by his early education; but men who begin where he leaves off will develop a moral feeling as to the sinfulness of sin of a very different character.

For sins like those confessed by David in the fifty-first Psalm there were no specific legal offerings; yet the whole spirit of the suppliant is the creation of the Levitical sacrifice.

It has been said that the Jew had more conscience than any other nation. That the sons of Abraham were endowed with native fitness for their vocation may be conceded; but the natural power of conscience in Israel is a very insufficient explanation of the sense of sin which distinguished the Jews from all the nationalities of the old world. It was wrought into the tribes by the Levitical

economy. The most highly developed spiritual consciousness exalted the Jews above all the peoples of antiquity. The intensity and range of Hebrew moral feeling towards law and sin and God are traceable to the Mosaic ritual, and especially to the Mosaic atonement.

§ 4. The Christian teachings and uses of the Levitical sacrifice are manifold. We proceed to specify the chief of them.

1. *Sin, under both economies, is the transgression of the Divine law.* Hebrew legislation, both in its moral precepts and in its ceremonial ordinances, proceeded from God. Moses was simply the medium, and in no sense the source, of the civil and ecclesiastical arrangements of Israel. To the Jews the moral and ceremonial constituents of the Pentateuch were one law. They made no distinction between the moral and ceremonial. All was from God.

Doubtless there were those who observed that some commands were of obvious moral obligation, and that other commands were imposed, the reasons of which they did not comprehend. Still, all were alike revealed, and, on that account, all equally binding to the minds of men who acknowledged that they came from God.

All that God has enjoined on us is His law in our day, and of like binding force on our conscience and life. The Apostles employ the word "law" in this refined and comprehensive signification. St. Paul often denotes by law the sum of all moral and spiritual obligation, irrespective of the distinction of Jew and Gentile. All wrongdoing, therefore, is an infraction of the law. The definition of sin in the opening of this section is from the latest pages of the New Testament. "Sin is the transgression of the law," or, as in the Revised Version, "Sin is lawlessness."¹ The Levitical definition is the same. It is to "do any one of the things which the Lord hath commanded not to be done."²

§ 5.—2. *Death is the penalty and desert of sin under both dispensations.* We need not re-appeal to the texts which declare it. It is the invariable significance of death in Holy Scripture. Life for life, as exhibited in the Levitical sacrifice, implies it. The animal life was taken, the human life was spared, and the remission of sin immediately followed. The Jews knew the history of the temptation, the fall, the sentence, and the curse. The apocalyptical history of the world, in the

¹ 1 John iii. 4.

² Lev. iv. 2 ; v. 17.

opening pages of the Pentateuch, was written, in the first instance, for Hebrews only. It was imparted for the sake of the theocratic national life which was to be grounded on its facts. It explains the origin of the world, and traces the course of Divine Providence in such a manner, and only so far, as the design of the Mosaic institutes absolutely required. The earlier portion of the Mosaic books is the historical preface of the law, and the indispensable preparation for the covenant with Israel. It would be impossible to sunder the Book of Leviticus from the first sections of the Book of Genesis. That death came into the world of man by sin is presupposed in every atoning offering. Every fresh sacrifice after every fresh transgression set forth not only that sin forfeited life, but that every additional act of sin was a renewed breach of the condition on which life is intrusted, and exposed the sinner once more to the dread penalty.

§ 6.—3. *Atonement is effected under Judaism and Christianity by the penal substitution of life for life.* The life of the Hebrew was saved because the life of the symbolical offering was sacrificed in his stead. So the Lamb of God bore the sin of the world, that is, endured its penalty.

When an inspired writer is thinking only of the life of our Lord as given for the life of men, he says, "Christ *died* for our sins."¹ If his mind is absorbed in the sacrificial and atoning aspect of his offered life, he writes, "We have through His *blood* the forgiveness of sins."²

What are called "theories," namely, hypothetical explanations of atonement, have been, and are likely to be, of little value. In most cases they are metaphysical speculations on what atonement *ought to be*, and not a humble and submissive inquiry into what atonement *is* as disclosed in Holy Scripture. Their authors ignore or repudiate the Scriptural *facts* of sacrifice and atonement, and spin from the cobwebs of their own imaginations subjective and unscriptural *devices* to take their place. To this class belong the subtle, ingenious, and abortive conjectures of Erskine of Linlathen, M'Leod Campbell, Horace Bushnell, F. D. Maurice, Dr. Young, and many others.

The writings of some of these are profoundly interesting, and their Christian spirit beyond any encomium of ours. To know Erskine was to love him. His life was a revolt against the Northern creeds. His own conclusions were the unconscious

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 3.

² Eph. i. 7.

exaggeration common to all reactions. His views of law and sin, of human life, and the Divine treatment of men in Christ were his personal speculations, and were not derived from Christian sources. Their amiable author did not discover them in St. Paul. Erskine's therapeutical theory of atonement and justification must be traced to Plato. If the opinions of Erskine were not created by the Greek sage, they were at least found more perfectly echoed by him than by any one else. He naïvely confesses to a distinguished correspondent, "I have been reading Plato with immense interest and astonishment. In 'Gorgias' I find the doctrine of the atonement in its principle applied to the conscience *better than in any religious book I ever read.*" Of course, Erskine does not use the word "atonement" in its Biblical signification. One wonders that he was without misgiving when the catholic consent of Christendom was against him, and the Pagan philosopher his only sympathetic guide.¹

M'Leod Campbell was another of a choice and beautiful spirit, but in rebellion against Scottish Calvinism. An atonement with a limited application was his special aversion. But he did not oppose it with the ordinary polemical weapons.

¹ Letters, p. 182, 2nd edit.

Like a metaphysical theologian, in contrast to a scientific inquirer, he excogitated a theory of atonement to meet his doctrinal necessities, and then went to Holy Scripture to find texts to support it. His method necessarily vitiated his conclusions. He never prosecuted a Biblico-theological examination of the Divine Word to ascertain the mind of God. The inductive procedure has been followed by none of the writers to whom we have referred. But it does not enter into our plan to pursue the windings of speculative error.¹

Theories of propitiation by men who accept the Biblical *fact* of propitiation are of little worth. The rectoral theory of the chief Evangelical teachers of the past age is generally abandoned as superficial and insufficient. The latest speculation, that of Dr. Dale, is obscure and unsatisfactory. The rationalistic theories glanced at above are exceeding ingenious and subtle, but their very subtlety and ingenuity are their condemnation. Hebrew ordinances were instituted to symbolise the first and most obvious religious ideas, and to meet the uppermost and pressing religious needs of a mixed and imperfectly civilised multitude of common

¹ For a searching criticism of these subjective hypotheses, consult Cave, *Script. Doct. Sacrifice*; Crawford, *Atonement*; and Dale, *Atonement*. The two former are specially valuable.

people. Superfine, impalpable, and aerial speculations to tax the disciplined metaphysician were no part of the design of Levitical ritual. It dramatised the requirements of universal humanity.

In a healthier atmosphere of religious thought such hypotheses will be accounted profane. They were far from that in the intentions of their laborious contrivers. When theology is subjected to the rule of scientific method, such works will be esteemed the height of folly. Revealed facts and inspired assertions are our only authoritative informants, and a rigid induction of instances is our sole instrument for the discovery of truth. The procedure of the minds just alluded to is a violation of the first laws of Biblical inquiry, and the doctrinal fruit of their excursions into the land of dreams is in many aspects naturally enough anti-christian. Doubtless their efforts have had their uses. They have rebuked injurious tendencies of earlier theories—theories, in some phases, as defective in origin and as vain in issue as their own.

Before theologians can formulate all the principles and explain all the bearings of so stupendous an event as the death of the Lord Jesus Christ for the life of the world, they must better understand the facts which they are handling. For the *whole* of the facts we shall have long to wait. The single

fact of death, to go no farther, lies altogether beyond our range.

Confident unbelief demands, How could the death of Christ be the enduring of the penalties of a world? Without the slightest hesitation we reply: We do not know. We commit our soul in unbounded trust to the fact, as we yield our body to the sustaining virtue of bread, though we profess but a dim insight into the complicated mysteries of nutrition. To begin with, we do not know what death itself is as a fact, much less can we tell what the death of the Eternal Son of God was in sinless humanity. As spectators of death in others, we see weakness and suffering, shrinkings and dreads. If death is sudden and in the fulness of strength, the visible result is one. Before us are the silent remains without light and life. They decay and return to dust. Ah me! the mystery, the mystery! Where was *man*, there is now nothing but *inanimate and insensate clay*. We know what the death of those whom we love brings to us—separation and grief, sadness and tears. Here we have to pause. We can get no farther.

But what is *death* to the *dying* and the *dead*? We see only the outward tokens. Death is God's curse on sin. A world without sin is a world without death. The extent of God's curse is unrevealed.

We behold only the external signs and accompaniments. We cannot penetrate the unseen reality. No one has died and risen and told us what he has learnt. The lips of the risen have always been sealed. No authentic report has reached us. What we witness is not the curse, but the first out-shadowing pre-intimation. We discern only the dark prediction of something beyond that grasps fast around it the folds which enshroud its dread mysteries. "Death" is always vastly more than what is externally apparent. So is "life." To materialise these terms, as is the manner of some, is to dismiss them to the pole which is the extreme opposite to Biblical thought and feeling. On the inspired page you have, in the same identical persons and objects, relations and acts, present and clear realities, and, at the same time, things that yet are not, vague, stupendous, hovering in the distance, in formless mystery and grandeur.

The physical aspects of death are all that are visible to sense. Only that which comes within the range of vision is presented in the symbol, to which every one adds the associations begotten by his own experience, sensibility, and reflection. These differ in different persons, from blind stolidity to a preternatural and ever-wakeful sensitiveness to every whispered undertone of the

dread mystery. How much one mind puts into the symbol; how little another! But what are the realities symbolised? Who can tell?

Things in the Bible are greater than out of the Bible. In certain states of the atmosphere all objects acquire a visual enlargement. In the Biblical atmosphere all things assume real dimensions not apparent elsewhere. How does this come about? Because all common things, under inspired influence, become symbolic and predictive. The palpable things which we are immediately handling and the ordinary transactions which we are sharing attain higher meanings and forecast greater realities. The unique and essential method of Biblical teaching is that it is symbolic. Everything is greater than it seems, and is directed to far more important ends than are visible in immediate uses. Prophet, priest, king, lawgiver, judge, father, mother, and much besides in Holy Scripture, can never be prophet, priest, king, lawgiver, judge, father, mother, &c., merely and only. They adumbrate more than you find in their actual relationships and functions. You are conscious of larger ideas than the terms themselves denote. They project shadows of more immense realities.

This is the clue to the undefined significance of death. We only imperfectly know the symbol of

what we do not know. It must be encountered to be apprehended.

Jesus Christ, the sinless and co-equal Son of the Ever-Blessed, "*tasted death*"—realised it all. It is to what is unknown to us in death that we must refer much which baffles us in the last hours and moments of our adorable Saviour. He saw clearly all that lay at the back of the ordinary signs and tokens of death. Hence His agony in the Garden. On the cross He experienced the penal darkness which isolates from God. Hence the dying cry, "*Why hast Thou forsaken me?*"¹ As the revelation of the sinfulness of sin, and as the expression of the wrath of God on evil, Jesus "*tasted death.*" To Him it unveiled all its aspect. None of the meaning of death was dulled to His eye; none of the guilt of which it is the representation was blunted to His heart and conscience. He tasted every grain of its bitterness—He experienced it all.

The spirit in which we should contemplate the substitutionary and atoning death of the incarnate Son of God is that of awe and reverence in the presence of a dread and blessed mystery, the meaning of which falls only in dim and broken lines on our understandings. No theory, no speculative

¹ Matt. xxvii. 46.

explanation of its full import is within our grasp. With or without an approximate solution of its causes, let it be our chief concern to rest in its Divine *facts*.

The difference between the symbolical and the real sacrifice is too wide to be appreciated. How vast the disparity between the death of an unconscious and unconsenting animal, uninspired by love and incapable of the self-surrender of holy filial obedience, and the death of the Son of God, the revelation of the Father, in a sinless human nature! But however great the dissimilarity, the main teaching of the symbolical sacrifice and atonement must be retained. The endurance of the penalty of death must not be explained away. Whatever higher elements are discernible in a later revelation, they cannot contradict the lower elements of an earlier revelation, exhibited to the world by the special providence of God during fifteen or sixteen centuries. The Antitype must fulfil the type—must *fill full* all its significance—however much it may surpass and transcend it. The substance will not cancel or reverse the predictive shadow.

To obliterate the foundations of a severe Doric temple and substitute for its sharp parallelogram the ground-forms of the towers and buttresses,

the transepts and aisles, the nave and choir, the apse and chapels, of a floriated Gothic cathedral, could never be called the fulfilment of an architectural design. The original lines must not be forsaken, whatever freedom may be exercised in the choice of details, if the completed edifice is to be considered in any sense at all a fulfilment. Such is our contention in seeking the meaning of the cry, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!"

§ 7.—4. *Justification under both economies is forensic or juridical.* A rigorous and impartial induction of all the cases in which the verb *to justify* occurs will necessitate the specified conclusion. But the issue does not turn on the *usus loquendi* of a word. The whole sphere of atonement and justification is forensic. Under the theocracy it was *law* which revealed sin—*law* which denounced penalty—*law* which prescribed atonement—*law* which punished transgression when no sacrifice was offered—*law* which atonement satisfied—*law* which acquitted the penitent, and *law* which dismissed him from the altar forgiven, and shielded him in the enjoyment of all his recovered rights and privileges. We are dealing with *things* rather than *words* when we assert

that it was a juridical acquittal accorded to the sacrificing worshipper.

Unless a typical justification means a justification which does *not* typify, the justification of the New Testament must be similarly forensic or juridical. There is no appearance in the typology of Holy Scripture of any such perplexing *lucus a non lucendo* as that just suggested. *Justify*, in the nomenclature of St. Paul, is strictly Hebraic. But what is more important, if you turn to St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, it becomes immediately apparent that the whole fulfilled truth of atonement and justification is set forth in the juridical region, and is never conceived out of it. We are not plunging into a wrangle of *words*. Our concern is with *things*. Humanity—Jew and Gentile—is under *law*.¹ Sin is an infraction of *law*. Where there is *no law*, transgression is impossible.² All men are sinners—condemned by *law*.³ Hence, men are without a righteousness—conformity with *law*, which they can plead *before God in judgment*.⁴ The Apostle eagerly insists that the atonement and justification of fulfilment do not “make void the *law*.” On the contrary, they “establish the *law*.”⁵ Nay, the

¹ Rom. ii. 14–15.

² Rom. iv. 15.

³ Rom. iii. 9, 19.

⁴ Rom. iii. 20.

⁵ Rom. iii. 31.

“*law*” is to be carried into the inner life of men and perfected there.¹ “No condemnation” falls on the believing from *law*.² Hereafter they shall be “*saved from wrath*,” which is the infliction of *law*.³ At the close of his great argument St. Paul passes to the very scene of judgment. “It is God that *justifieth*,” he protests, and demands, “Who is he that shall *condemn*?”⁴ The whole area of the Apostle’s contemplation is *in foro divino*.⁵ God is on His judicial throne, and the saved are justified at His bar.⁶

§ 8.—5. *The Levitical and Christian revelations alike display a gracious and a holy God.* The aim of penal suffering is not the amendment of the transgressor. Punishment exasperates and hardens. There is no evidence that it ever wrought improvement in any one. The criminal classes always consider themselves wronged by the sentences pronounced on their offences, and regard the administrators of law as their natural foes.

¹ Rom. viii. 1-4.

² Rom. viii. 1.

³ Rom. v. 9.

⁴ Rom. viii. 32-34.

⁵ Rom. ii. 3, 5, 12, 13, 16 ; iii. 6, 19, 20.

⁶ For a thorough vindication of the doctrine of a forensic or juridical justification, see the very learned and able monograph of Rev. James Morison, D.D., on the 3rd chapter of Romans. It is not as well known as his admirable Commentaries on Matthew and Mark.

Pains and penalties are inflicted on the evil-doer because they are right, because they are his desert, and because to withhold them would be wrong. That is the primary verdict of conscience, and is very apparent in public sentiment whenever any great criminal either escapes or endures the punishment due to his remorseless deeds.

Whenever judicial suffering is followed by reformation, it is always because other and different agents are in operation. Pains, of themselves, never create moral regrets, and excite and sustain no resolves to do better. Under the manifold and remedial influences of a system of grace and probation, endurance is often succeeded by wisdom and virtue. God's whole treatment of men makes restoration its supreme end. But it is the indispensable antecedent to such an issue that the penalty shall be right, that it shall be the sinner's desert, and shall express the Lawgiver's just sense of his wrong-doing. The dispensation of justice, therefore, is the first intention of moral government. The administration of desert is the requirement of conscience and the teaching of Holy Scripture. "Shall not He render to every man according to his work?"¹ Such are the reiterated declarations of the Old and New Testaments.

¹ Prov. xxiv. 12 ; Rom. ii. 6.

Even in shielding the forfeited life of the sinner, life had to be taken away. Whether we attempt to explain the requirement or leave it unexplained, life is sacrificed in order to pardon transgression under both dispensations. We are not unfolding subjective hypotheses ; we are reciting transparent facts. The solemn sanctions of holy law could not be set aside. But God is as pitiful in the past and the present as He is righteous. Sacrifice, whatever else, is the provision of clemency. Whatever is placed between the sinner and his sentence discloses a gracious God. The Gospel is not grace in a sense which denies all grace to earlier revelations of God. The new covenant is not exclusively, but pre-eminently and in realisation “grace and truth.” The sin-offering displayed at once the unswerving holiness and the tender mercy of our God.

§ 9.—6. *In the Mosaic and Christian dispensations atonement or propitiation by sacrifice precedes pardon.* Under every economy of revealed religion, men are required to be sorry for the wrong which they have done and to repent of the evil which they have committed. This is demanded of every professed believer in Christ. Yet, nevertheless, forgiveness is dispensed through the atoning

sacrifice alone. A devout Hebrew would regret his violation of law, and sincerely resolve to avoid it for the future; but neither penitence nor vows could alter the law, nor supply any other preliminary to restoration to favour, nor possible condition of it, than what the holy mercy of God had provided. Nothing but the sacrifice could harmonise the broken relations of the worshipper towards God, and replace him as before in the family and society, in the church and the state. "Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission"¹ is common to both covenants.

The Jew might wonder how an animal life could warrant the release and forgiveness of a man; but there was the fact continually before him that it did avail. He both witnessed in others and experienced in himself the reality. We may ask, how does the one sacred life cover the sin of the whole world, and cover for ever? And we may find only partial answers to our questions, or none at all. Let us, however, humbly and thankfully accept the fact.

Gross burlesques of the great truth which we are expounding are sadly too common. They are in part due to ignorance and in part to the warping influence of aversion to the teaching of Holy Scrip-

¹ Heb. ix. 22.

ture. Such misrepresentations of Christian belief used to be confined to professed Unitarians. But now men in avowedly orthodox Churches are guilty of first traducing and then renouncing our Lord's propitiatory sacrifice. Nearly a century ago, Archbishop Magee wrote, in reply to Dr. Priestley: "The sacrifice of Christ was never deemed by any, who did not wish to calumniate the doctrine of atonement, to have *made* God placable; but merely viewed as the *means*, appointed by Divine Wisdom, through which to bestow forgiveness."¹ Men in orthodox communities now almost exceed Priestley in the virulence and bitterness with which they caricature the catholic doctrine of Christendom.

The vice of all assailants of the orthodox teaching on atonement is, that they never state it as it is set forth in Holy Scripture, and as it is believed and preached by those who accept it. The Revs. F. D. Maurice and F. W. Robertson of Brighton are conspicuous examples of this grave defect. Both must have been unread in the literature of sacrifice and atonement. Mr. Maurice was too sincere and Mr. Robertson too honest to pervert intentionally convictions from which they differed. Yet they credit orthodox Christians with holding and teaching no other than the pagan conception of sacrifice.

¹ Works, vol. i. p. 15, 4th edit.

Mr. Maurice was a Unitarian in education, and in the essence of his soteriology never rose above Unitarianism. His doctrine of sacrifice was substantially that of Bähr, though Mr. Maurice's chief inspiration was from Linlathen.

Bähr treated the sin-offering as a symbol of the sinner's self-surrender to God. A more unfortunate and misleading symbol could not be conceived. If the animal had been presented alive, it might have represented the consecration of living powers to the Divine service. But the blood upon the altar was not the certification of life living, but of life slain—of life that had borne the extreme penalty of the law, of once living powers now dead, and incapable of surrender. A symbol more full of symbolical import the direct contradiction of its alleged symbolical design it would be impossible to imagine. Besides, self-presentation was not the truth which man required to have symbolised. Man's immediate and most urgent need is ignored in a symbolical self-surrender. The blotting out of the past is the great and pressing want.

The theory is without any exegetical basis, and is obsolete already. Its essential features Kurtz does not think it worth his while to discuss, because nobody adopts it. Delitzsch dismisses it in very slighting and disparaging terms, on account

of its trivial superficiality, as representing ideas unknown to the Hebrew Scriptures, and because it has passed out of the consideration of theologians.

Mr. Maurice, we presume, was unacquainted with the Hebrew text. He makes the truth and inaccuracies of the Authorised Version alike echo his notions, though his apprehensions agree with neither. The words of the English Bible are merely pegs on which to hang, in the loosest manner, the drapery of his fancies. His speculations are literary dreaming rather than thinking. His interpretations of Holy Scripture remind one of a chemical liquid dropped into a solution which transmutes the whole into a fresh substance. That his book on sacrifice produced the slightest effect on religious opinion only exhibited the deplorable condition into which Hebrew exegesis and Biblico-theological studies had sunken in England.

Mr. Robertson was a man of earnestness, and singularly gifted with the genius of the preacher. In handling moral questions, as distinguished from theological, his insight was quick, keen, and unerring, and his clear, incisive, and vigorous expression was the natural embodiment of his thought. But he was a man of hasty prejudices and vehe-

ment feelings. His love and hate were alike intense. Both these clergymen assailed what they had not taken the trouble to understand, and unconsciously vilified what they imagined they were analysing and exposing. It was the doctrine of propitiation as distorted and darkened by their sinister fancies and jaundiced prepossessions which they denounced. The blows of Mr. Robertson especially were as blind as they were fierce.¹ It would have been impossible to cite from any instructed contemporary the heathen notions which Mr. Maurice and Mr. Robertson attributed to orthodox theologians.

The Rev. J. Baldwin Brown prolonged the echoes of the Scottish revolt against the Scriptural doctrines of atonement and justification. Mr. Brown was endowed with a very decided gift for eloquent declamation, but he possessed all the defects of the school which he represented, and afforded little help indeed to the studious and dispassionate inquirer. Mr. Brown derived his ideas from theological speculation. He never sought the Biblical conception of sacrifice and propitiation by means of a patient and accurate exegesis of the Old Testa-

¹ For an examination of Mr. Robertson's shocking theory of our Lord's sufferings and death, see Crawford, *Atonement*, p. 335 *et seq.*

ment Word. When he writes, "The power of the Gospel lies in the ATONEMENT OFFERED FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD,"¹ it is apparent that the Scriptural purport of the ancient ritual has not dawned on him. The phrase, "the atonement offered for sin," is not Biblical, and the thought is not Biblical. It is derived from books, and not from *the Book*. Mr. Brown, too, misrepresents the teaching which he resists. Like Mr. Robertson, he was animated by strong feelings of aversion to forms of truth which he had not mastered, and, like Mr. Maurice, to whom he was confessedly indebted, he recorded his personal views in a haze of most undesirable obscurity.

It is to be regretted that we never hear of the conscience of God in theological nomenclature. We speak of the heart of God. Why have we not naturalised in theological discussion the *conscience* of God? If the requirement of sacrifice had been uniformly attributed to the conscience of God—the serene, unerring, immutable sense of righteousness in the Divine nature—the most perverse antagonist would have been unable to asperse the Biblical atonement as the resort of malicious exasperation.

The anger of God is His moral indignation

¹ Divine Life in Man, 2nd edit., p. 109.

against sin. The organ which resents all evil is the conscience. The wrath of God is the activity of the Divine conscience, and is far more terrible than spiteful irritation. The latter is capricious and fitful, and may burn itself out; the former, never.

Under both revelations, the Mosaic and the Christian, God, the Father of all and the sole Law-giver, is the sole Atoner. His holy mercy covers transgression by sacrifice. It may be very terrible that sin is so dread an evil, that its penalties are so appalling, and that the law of God cannot be trampled on. But the truth abides that forgiveness through the atoning or propitiatory sacrifice is the only remedy possible to guilty men and open to the conscience of God. Propitiation must precede pardon.

§ 10.—7. *The Old and the New Covenants develop kindred religious feelings and a similar religious life.* If the Mosaic dispensation had been utterly unlike the Christian dispensation, the one could not have prepared for the other, and the former would have been altogether unnecessary to the latter. The earlier economy, in that case, could shed no light on the later, but, as the first is confessedly inferior to the second, would certainly obscure and degrade it. The disciples of

Moses and of Christ exhibit the same general ideas of law, sin, and death, of mercy, holiness, and sacrificial mediation. When a son of Abraham had broken any law, and his conscience was awakened to the fact, his feeling of guilt would be in proportion to his moral sensibility. The Hebrews had not our measure of religious knowledge, but they were, to say the least, equally susceptible to the influence of religious truths and ordinances. Heaven and earth to them were not far asunder. God mingled in their civil, social, and religious life, so as to make them feel His ceaseless activity among them. What they lacked in breadth of intelligence was compensated by nearness of vision and depth of impression.

That their transgressions were so frequently ceremonial would not make the sense of sin in their minds any less. A devout man always feels that any word of God begets unlimited obligation to obedience. Wherever there is a Divine command, through the mysterious power of the tie which binds creature to Creator, there arises the consciousness of duty. Ceremonial and moral were alike from God. The only difference is, that in the moral command we see some of the reasons of the injunction; in the ceremonial or merely positive, we do not. It is our decided

opinion that the majority of human beings are far more profoundly affected with a sense of sin from ceremonial than from moral transgressions. It is the few who revere moral law as such. It is the result of exceptional moral training. The sentiments of society are a far higher authority to millions than the abstract right or wrong of immutable morality, or even of Holy Scripture.

The great mass of church-going people in Britain, at this moment, would be more troubled if they fell short of the human and conventional demands of religion in their sect or their neighbourhood, than if they had been grievously wanting in penitence and faith, in devoutness and charity before God only. When external requirements can claim Divine origination or sanction, their binding force is all the more intensified. It was because, to the religious Hebrew, the sanctuary was a real world, and every minute injunction pressed upon the conscience, that the ritual was so intolerable a burden, and the sense of sin so vital and abiding.

Death was constantly before the eyes of the children of Israel as the penalty of sin. When a man of faith was overtaken in a fault, impelled by the same human and Divine reasons which actuate us, he would hunger to be restored to the favour of God and to the worship of the tent of meeting from

which sin had removed him. When the appointed victim was slain and the blood was offered, he would look with awe on the symbolical acts, which reflected both his desert and the Divine acceptance of the substitutionary life of the animal. He would leave the sacrificial court with a grateful and peaceful heart, and would go on his way rejoicing. That the Jews, as a nation, looked forward to the facts of the New Testament is nowhere indicated in the ancient Scriptures. What their actual forecast of coming times was we cannot conjecture. They had immediate spiritual wants, a Divine religion was extant before them, a visible atonement was made; and God was present in their midst, all-merciful and all-holy, vindicating law and dispensing grace, expressing His Divine sense of His creature's sin, and magnifying His saving compassion.

§ 11.—8. *Atonement, in Leviticus and in the Gospel, is a finished interposition on behalf of the sinner.* It was something done and completed. When the animal was slain and the blood offered, that was the end of the transaction. The sacrificer could add nothing to the validity of the process, nor supplement the efficacy of the expiatory ordinance. It was sufficient. Nothing more was required; nothing would have been accepted. The

propitiation which Christ effected is offered to our faith as perfect in itself and as adequate to our religious needs. To the soul burdened and crushed by the sense of its sins this is the indispensable truth. It is of all others the most precious. There is immediate and absolute deliverance in Christ. The Lord Jesus has *covered*, obliterated sin for every soul that simply trusts in Him. The past can never accuse and condemn the soul any more that hides itself in the Son of God and Saviour of the world.

§ 12.—9. *The penitent, alike in the New and Old Testament Church, is "justified by faith apart from the works of the law."*¹ The Jew, no doubt, ordinarily meant by "law" all the moral and ceremonial precepts enjoined on him. But to the more thoughtful *the law* became another name for the whole mind of God, embracing all moral and religious obligation. This elevated construction of law is apparent in the Psalms, especially in the nineteenth and one hundred and nineteenth. The latter is a marvel of spiritual insight and experience. In the New Testament, and especially in the writings of St. Paul, *the law* assumes a still more transfigured spirituality, and expresses the sum of all

¹ Rom. iii. 28.

perfection. But however much the conception of law may vary in breadth or subtlety, the Apostolic maxim abides the same: "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."¹ That a penitent is acquitted without fulfilling the requirements of his natural obligations follows from the fact that atonement or propitiation is an objective interposition on behalf of the sinner, impersonal so far as his own effort is concerned, impossible to his own abilities and resources, and completed in every particular for him. The sinner is not exhorted, "Reinstate yourself in obedience, then bring your sacrifice, and finally you shall be forgiven." The order is atonement, pardon, and sincere endeavour after a better future. The sinner cannot go back into the past and undo what he has done, nor do over again what he has done and do it otherwise. The breach in his loyalty cannot be repaired. There must be a new beginning. God must virtually exterminate the past and initiate holier and happier days by the immediate bestowal of pardoning mercy. But it must be mercy which does not lower the sinner's sense of his sin in taking him back to favour.

However atonement may be related to the "works of the law," "justification" in itself must

¹ Rom. iii. 20.

be independent of them. The Hebrew relied on nothing for restoration but the Divine acceptance of the sacrificial offering. He might have been an affectionate husband, a kind father, an amiable member of society, an upright citizen, and a zealous patriot. His ordinary religious life might have been unimpeachable, his benevolence might have been exemplary, but he never would have dreamed that his character and behaviour could add anything to the prescribed offering or become a substitute for neglect of atonement. When he had transgressed a precept or contracted defilement, the sacrifice—only the sacrifice, nothing but the sacrifice—availed to restore him to his national, domestic, social, and religious privileges. He went to the altar as a sinner who could offer no reparation in kind for duty neglected and commandment broken, but presented the spotless life through which God, clement as pure, bestowed forgiveness. It is the same now. Justification—acquittal from penalty and acceptance to favour—is, through faith in Christ, “apart from the works of the law.” Our trust must rest in the great propitiation only. We turn to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

§ 13.—10. *Under both the Old and the New*

Testaments, penitent sinners are to repair at once to the blood of atonement. The Jew would not grow better by waiting. Time has no power to cleanse from moral or ceremonial defilement. Delay was then, as it is now, disobedience and persistent and repeated evil-doing. The Hebrew did not imagine that he could do anything to improve his state before he went to the tent of meeting. Whatever he might do, he was, according to his offence or uncleanness, excluded from his friends, cut off from the sanctuary, and, in the case of some transgressions, exposed to the penalties of civil law. He went just as he was, simply because he could do nothing which was capable of affecting his relation to past conduct and impending consequences. He approached the altar before God in his pollution, with the required sacrifice as the only thing to be done.

In our relationships and needs, no other resort is open to us. In every way men grow worse if they procrastinate. The only rational and the only religious course for a penitent sinner is to go straight to the Saviour. He cannot alter himself or his circumstances for the better. In his sin and helplessness and ruin he will be received and welcomed. The finished mediation, which justifies "apart from the works of the law," is divinely

adapted to our exact situation. "Jesus Christ, the righteous . . . is the propitiation for our sins."¹ This is the precious truth which gladdens the hearts of contrite sinners in our choicest hymns—

"Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me."

"Nothing in my hand I bring ;
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

"I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God."

§ 14.—11. *There is no delay between atonement and pardon in either the past or present dispensations.* There is one difference between the ancient and the modern worshipper. Every Hebrew provided his own sacrifice, and brought a fresh offering with every fresh sense of need. We have but one sacrifice, offered by the High Priest of man once for all. Each of us must make that one sacrifice his own by faith. The Jews themselves were periodically in circumstances resembling our own. The great public atonements were impersonal. They were, of course, representative and national, but individual interest in these transactions was possible only to faith. These economical dis-

¹ 1 John ii. 1, 2.

similarities do not affect the truths which we now desire to exhibit.

When the Hebrew offered the sacrifice and the atonement was made, he was pardoned at once. He "went down to his house," and everywhere else, "justified,"¹ acquitted with the sanction of law, and restored to favour and to all his relationships, duties, and privileges. To him who places his simple trust in his atoning Saviour, in the same manner and for the same reason, forgiveness does not tarry. The penitent is not to confide in Christ to-day and be pardoned to-morrow, or the next day, or nobody knows when. *Now*, when his faith rests in the Lord, he is forgiven. He does not see with his eyes that he is set free; he may not feel it in his mind. He may not be able at once to take to himself the comfort of the reality and enjoy its peace. But his acceptance is a *fact* all the same. God always pardons the contrite and believing then and there, when their faith is directed to Him for that end. The Scriptures do not suggest a moment's delay.

The Jew saw the atonement, and in countless external facts realised that he was a forgiven man; to us, it is all faith. Still the truth remains the same in both cases, that the atonement is real,

¹ Luke xviii. 14.

complete, and effectual; and the pardon, in like manner, is actual, immediate, and irreversible. The sin is exterminated for ever as a thing that accuses, condemns, and burdens the penitent sinner.

The Hebrew had often led the sacrifice within the sacred enclosure, had as frequently performed the awful act of taking the life of the victim, had as commonly witnessed the placing of the shed blood on the altar of God, hard by the hallowed symbols of the Divine presence and majesty, and had as uniformly seen, felt, and experienced, through innumerable outward evidences, the reality of atonement and the immediacy of forgiveness. His pardoned condition was attested, in accordance with the nature of his transgression or defilement, by restoration to the family, to friendship, to society, to religious ordinances, and to all the privileges of a son of Abraham. So we may repeat our acceptance of a real and immediate forgiveness by spiritual trust in the great propitiation, until the intense power and the settled habit of faith surpass sense in the assured certitude and rest which they develop in the soul.

§ 15.—12. *Atonement is similarly related to justification and sanctification under the Levitical and Christian economies. All departure*

from the Biblical conception of atonement or propitiation necessitates a reconstruction of Christian doctrine in a variety of grave particulars. An unscriptural expiation is impossible without an unscriptural soteriology. One result is the not uncommon identification of justification and sanctification. The former is resolved into the latter. In the theory which cancels these important distinctions, faith is an energy by means of which the sinner develops a real and personal righteousness, and on account of his internal righteousness he is acquitted and accepted of God. He is regarded as righteous because he is righteous. He is justified on the ground of his own righteousness. This is the doctrine which the whole life and labour of St. Paul so strenuously resisted. x

There is but one alternative through the centuries, and that is—salvation by Christ and salvation by self. This is the ultimate issue, however much it may be disguised and confused. The advocates of salvation by self pronounce justification through faith in the atonement of Christ unnatural, artificial, unreal, fictitious, and much besides. One supposed advantage of this relapse into old error is, that in its teaching a man is called and regarded as what he is, namely, just or righteous. He is “justified” because he is personally entitled to the

standing and rewards of the upright. The Pauline doctrine, on the other hand, is aspersed, as naming believers what they are not, and treating them as such ; that is, although they are avowedly penitents it names and treats them as righteous in Christ, "justifies," pronounces their acquittal and forgiveness, "apart from the works of the law."

The possibilities of theological speculation are very narrow in their compass. There is nothing substantially novel in the hypothesis which we are criticising. It is only a more circuitous, insidious, and disguised pharisaism than that which St. Paul resented. It is practically indistinguishable from the dogma of the Papacy on justification as finally shaped by the Council of Trent. Extremes meet. Socinian and rationalistic theories of justification coincide, in the main, with the Tridentine. To all rationalistic theories of justification the Biblical atonement is a troublesome encumbrance. The word "atonement" has to be dropped or take on another meaning, and its substance is explained away. The most ignorant and unguarded expounder of the orthodox faith never separated atoning sacrifice so completely from a life of righteousness as do these revived schemes of subtilised self-righteousness. Not a single root of religious practice is anywhere struck into our Lord's propitiatory media-

tion, except that the grace which produces personal righteousness in men reaches them in some obscure way through Christ.

Many weighty objections might be urged against such unsatisfactory hypotheses. We shall specify here but one. It is exposed to *every particular charge* which it brings against the doctrine of St. Paul. It calls a man what he is not, namely, righteous. It treats him as what he is not before the law and before God, that is, righteous. It does not treat him as what he is according to theory, namely, imperfectly righteous. One imperfectly righteous is a sinner, and under penalties of law, and out of Divine favour. If a man "stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all."¹ No law will acquit a thief because he is an indulgent parent, nor condone murder because the culprit is studiously upright in business. If it be replied, that a penitent is confessedly imperfect, but that the mercy of God turns aside the retributions of justice from the head of the repentant and receives him to favour, what is that but treating him as what he is not? He is a transgressor and does not experience the due of the transgressor, but the reverse.

What advantage, then, is there in giving up the

¹ James ii. 10.

doctrine of Holy Scripture and accepting a soteriology which is Unitarian and not Biblical? None whatever. The terrible detriment would result that we should have before us no Divine self-vindication, and sinning men would be left to gravitate to low views and superficial convictions regarding the nature of sin and holiness, death and life, the dignity and immutability of law, and the rectitude and majesty of God.

The so-called moral theory of atonement, in all its phases, is naturally allied to the opinions which we are controverting. Of course the Biblical meaning of atonement is abjured. There is no place remaining for its operation. Only the word is retained. This hypothesis represents that the sole aim of our Lord's death was to affect the hearts of men and constrain their obedience by means of the love of which His cross was the expression. Justification by one's own righteousness is the result.

As soon as we know that the only reason of any endurance is to touch our feelings, it impresses us no longer. It is no more than a winking virgin to a devotee, who finds out that it is done by pulling a string. If any one jumped into a furnace to convince us that he loved us, we should not be able to doubt his affection, but we could not respect

the act, nor the intelligence which prompted it. We should pity our friend, and not be disposed to follow his counsels. But if we were in a house on fire, enveloped in smoke and flame, helpless and perishing, and he rushed in and carried us out, and was wounded, scorched, and half-suffocated in the process, it would indeed be an irresistible evidence of his love and a most powerful appeal to our own ; not because he was burning himself to play upon our feelings, but because he saved us in spite of great self-exposure and acute and inevitable suffering.

Why a doctrine should be called moral anything which bears no relation to the moral nature and the moral necessities of things, it is difficult to tell. The *emotional* theory would be more descriptive, but not of atonement, as that is spurned, not infrequently, with indignation and contempt. The *immoral* theory would be the more correct epithet, on account of the indifference which the hypothesis betrays to moral law, to moral sanctions, and the moral unchangeableness of the Divine nature.

Justification by self-righteousness is a most mischievous doctrine. It conducts none to higher ascents of personal righteousness. It leads to extreme results, passing by intermediate effects. In some it will develop the old Pharisaic moral

blindness and self-complacency. A very superficial righteousness will acquit them before God in their own eyes. But, alas ! for natures of quick and vivid conscientiousness ! Souls with spiritual sensibilities, habituated to moral introspection, to whom the presence of sin is as a grit in the eye, have nothing but torment and anguish before them. They will never be sufficiently satisfied with their own righteousness to look upon themselves as "justified." They are doomed to pass a life without any consciousness of release from their burdens. Acceptance to the favour of God is beyond their realisation. To them it is a doctrine of misery and despair. For souls with a sense of sin begotten by the Spirit of God there is no balm in this direction. It is impossible to wring satisfaction and peace out of one's own righteousness. It is as hopeless as rolling the marble block of Sisyphus uphill only to roll back again. Instead of a child restored at once to the love of God, through the finished propitiation of Christ, a penitent is transformed into a self-torturing fakir, who never finds within a sanctification in which his heart can rest.

No doubt the Biblical doctrine which we are vindicating has not escaped misapprehension. Possibly uninstructed preachers may have repre-

sented that justification is entirely prior to sanctification, and that the sole relation between them is that holiness is prompted by nothing but the gratitude excited by pardon. It is, however, essential to remember that God "justifies," acquits, and accepts the penitent only. Indeed, only the penitent can be "justified." To pronounce acquittal and forgiveness over the rebellious could convey nothing to them. You cannot release and pardon men who have no desire for these blessings. They would not have them. Were it possible to "justify" the impenitent, it would be an act of immorality and folly to dismiss wilful transgressors and condone their guilt.

As only the penitent and believing are acquitted and forgiven, the seeds of holiness are in every "justified" man. Sanctification, therefore, in this seminal and germinant stage, goes before and accompanies justification, as well as follows after it in ceaseless growth and expansion. Christian doctrines are not abstract truths, but complex phenomena, representing vital processes and theological apprehensions, and it is no easy matter to exhibit both in their natural harmony. Sanctification is the after-life of holiness; but we must not fail to recognise that a believing man comes to the blood of atonement with a purpose of a

better life within him. He is "justified," not by means of that first root of purity, nor on its account, but by faith in Christ and for Christ's sake. This embryotic sanctification is not the justifying cause and property in the man's new standing, as released from penalty and accepted of God ; but he could not be "justified" without it, as a matter of fact, and on the ground of moral principle.

If you cut a bulbous root into two halves, you will find the microscopic lines of the blossom for the next season within. Sanctification, if one goes to the core of the question, is like the rudiments of the flower in the heart of the bulb. It is already in the penitent in this elementary state when he sues for justification ; but the glow of a forgiven heart will act like tropical sunlight, which quickens latent vitality, evokes all the hidden beauty, and scatters delicious perfume.

The same spiritual processes were in operation under the ancient ritual. Was a devout and believing Jew bowed down beneath a sense of sin ? Was he anxious to be harmonised with the broken law ? Most assuredly his distinct intention would be to be loyal to Jehovah in the future. But there was no power in his good intention to "justify" him. His purpose of obedience could

not be the essential cause of his justification, nor was it the alleged ground on which justification was accorded to him. Only through atonement by sacrifice could he be legally acquitted and dismissed, pardoned and free. The consciousness of Divine grace and compassion, of course, would stimulate more circumspect and devoted submission to the mind of God in days to come.

If we represented that immoral and ungodly men were "justified," in order that they might persist in their immorality and ungodliness, assaults on apostolic doctrine would be matters of tremendous gravity. If any insinuate, as some do, that such is the import of the faith which we are setting forth, we shall pass over the calumny in silence. The saintliest lives which the world has seen are its vindication. Ever since St. Paul preached this gospel, there have not been wanting some who have slandered his message. But it is simply impossible to the moral consciousness of a sane human being to cry for remission and forgiveness on the basis of our Lord's atoning sacrifice with the resolves of an evil life in the heart. The holiest and the most heroic souls which have appeared among men became all that they were by faith in the blood of atonement. The one truth which should render all practical disloca-

tion of pardon and purity impossible is, that faith unites the soul to all that Christ is, to all that Christ has done, and to all that Christ lives to effectuate. A man of faith could not and would not limit his eager quest to justification. The deeper and more passionate cry in every soul that has seen the Lord is sanctification.

§ 16. — 13. *Both dispensations, the Levitical and the Christian, in different degrees and for somewhat different ends, resort to outward aids to faith.* An external transaction is a great help to many souls in their endeavours to realise personal acquittal, forgiveness, and restoration to the favour of God. The truth on which we desire here to insist is, that the symbols and the ritual acts of the past economy are most precious auxiliaries to us in the economy under which we live. They are preserved to us in the inspired documents as invaluable helps to the religious life. The Jew had spiritual forgiveness certified through ritual forgiveness. A believing Hebrew could hardly find himself ecclesiastically “justified” and dismissed from the altar to society and home, and yet depart unburdened of spiritual guilt. He would not split the one Divine act into its ritual and spiritual elements, enjoy his freedom as a *Jew*,

and bow down in gloom as a *man*. Nothing impresses me more in the Psalms than the *joyful* faith of which they are the enduring echo.

It is impossible to read the devout class of High Anglican treatises without discerning the presence of a real though sensuous faith stretching forth trembling hands for some materialⁿ support on which to lean. It seems a great thing to the writers that, according to their persuasion, a real sacrifice is offered in their midst, and they can go away from their services with the feeling that something has been done, transacted, and finished on their behalf. Some, no doubt, believe that the great sacrifice is offered anew in their assemblies, while others regard their eucharistic observances as the one continued offering, complete in its efficacy, but perpetuated as an ordinance; so, when they hear absolution pronounced by what they conceive to be rightful authority, they think a definite remission is theirs, and they depart satisfied.

There is no need more human and more universal, where the religious sense is active and vivid, than a real objective atonement. Those teachers have much to answer for who are offering their congregations metaphysical and moral speculations, instead of preaching the sacrificial

death of Christ for sinners. They are doing more than any class of men to drive poor souls to the High Anglican and Romish mass. Impoverished souls are sure to turn from rationalistic husks in the hour of their awakening need.

Many sincere Protestants desire a more assured persuasion of forgiveness and Divine favour. Nothing, of course, can become a substitute for simple faith in the Christ of God, whose blood was shed for the world; but it would help most if they gave to their religious acts more of the character of external transactions. In other words, let the inward life realise itself in more thoughtful and studious outward expression.

To serious believers we would venture to offer the following counsels :—

(1.) Let them first aid their apprehension of the process of justification and acceptance with God by familiarising their minds with all the particulars of the ancient offering for sin. When the sacrificial phraseology of the New Testament is read or used in devotional exercises and hymns, let not the words, as too often, be to the understanding mere film and shadow, vague and meaningless, but let their knowledge of the sacred transactions impart substance and worth to every representation of what our Saviour has accomplished for them. Under-

standing that the Lord Jesus has made atonement for human sin—has covered and exterminated transgression—go ever to God by faith for instantaneous remission and acceptance to fatherly love.

(2.) In prayer to God day by day let there be a definite and studied reappropriation of the blessings of the propitiatory sacrifice offered by our blessed Lord for sinners. It will be necessary to set apart time every day for private and personal communion with God. Any one without fixed habits of devotion, watchfully guarded from secular intrusion, cannot live in a spiritual world of vivid reality, and can attain to nothing but a dim and flickering sense, if any, of forgiveness and peace with God. Let the aim of prayer be intelligently conceived, and devoutly and believingly fulfilled. Prayer is exerted faith ; let the propitiation for sin be pleaded with God anew for immediate cleansing and rest. We have no new sacrifice to offer. It has been done “once for all.”¹ All that remains to us is to place the whole trust of the soul once more, every day, in the atonement of Christ, and ask again for pardon and inward tranquillity, which none ever besought in vain. This external transaction, constantly repeated in penitence and with

¹ Heb. vii. 27 ; ix. 26-28.

faith, will not fail to quicken the soul's realisation of its acceptance with God in Christ our Saviour.

The more vital the consciousness of justification and pardon, the more will sanctification be advanced and enhanced in the soul. He who, in the matter set forth, lives the nearest to the cross will develop the most vivid inward sense of the forgiving mercy of God; and the thankful heart which realises the most constantly the love of God in Christ will be the most in sympathy with holiness and the farthest removed from sin, in thought, in feeling, and in volition.

Spiritual sensitiveness the most tender, the most delicate, the most responsive, is to be acquired only in fellowship with the atoning Christ. This seems to be the meaning of St. John, to whom the propitiation of our Saviour, as the venerable Apostle was fast maturing for the heavenly life, was predominantly the instrument of sanctification. "If," said he, "we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin."¹ To such souls there is peace; and it is "the *peace* of God, which passeth all understanding," that "shall *guard* your *hearts* and your *thoughts in Christ Jesus*."²

¹ 1 John i. 7.

² Philip. iv. 7.

(3). Lastly, let the sacrament of the Lord's supper, which is a visible ordinance, be made a definite external transaction between the soul and God. Let the hallowed season be anticipated, as a time of opportunity for fresh and special expressions of penitence and acts of trust in the finished propitiation and redemption of Christ. When before the emblems of the body which was broken for you and the blood which was shed, pray for renewed faith in the atonement made and completed for you, and open your hearts to the remission and forgiveness then and there dispensed to you through your redeeming Lord. The very Christ Himself, the risen and ascended Head of His Church, is the real though unseen President. The officiating minister can only make the Master's words audible. They are readdressed by the Lord Himself. As the bread and the wine pass from worshipper to worshipper, your Redeemer gives Himself anew in the plenitude of His saving power to every believing recipient.

When you repair to your dwellings, let not the holy exercises vanish into a world of dreams, and the secular world become the only real world, and maintain an undisputed and terrible supremacy. Let all acts of faith in the sacrifice of Christ for the extermination of the penalties of sin and for the extermination of sin itself, whether in the closet or

the church, be so intelligent and so distinct, that they may be remembered in a long and unbroken succession of actual transactions between your soul and God, which can leave no room for distracting misgivings and paralysing doubts that in similar repetition and continuance He has dispensed and multiplied His grace and blessing.

Demonstration to the senses might certify your acceptance with God more impressively, but not more surely, than by faith so exerted. If the heavens were opened ; if the immediate efficacy of your Redeemer's sacrifice were visible to you in the events of the upper world ; if you could at one and the same moment see the bended knee of the lonely suppliant, hear the cry of penitence and faith, and witness the instantaneous forgiveness pronounced, as you might have beheld the Hebrew justified and dismissed after offering sacrifice—you would not have before you a more rational and sufficient, though you would have a more interesting and imposing, vindication of the confidence which receives immediate forgiveness and restoration, unburdenment and peace, through the blood of the cross. Let it be your prayer, " Lord, increase our faith," and lay yourselves out to increase it, and watch and work against its diminution.

If we could take the unseen things of earth and

heaven into our survey, nothing would more astonish us than the vast number of weak, ill-informed, and perplexed believers, who, like the penitent paralytic let down before Jesus, are really pardoned, and yet carry within them only a dull, troubled, and bewildered consciousness, and would hesitate to avow that Christ is indeed their Saviour, and God their gracious and loving Father in Him.

§ 17.—14. *The Old economy and the New exhibit the same identical principles of morality, law, and judgment.* The man unsheltered by atonement must encounter in his own person the *unbroken* force of *broken* law. Here both dispensations are alike. As church and state, society and the family, were all arrayed against the delinquent Hebrew, so the universe, visible and invisible, and the man's own nature, even his very soul, and God Almighty are all arrayed against the impenitent and unshielded transgressor. The eternal law of the Most High is his universal and unchanging foe. The jubilant inquiry of the Apostle is reversed to one of abject despair. "If God is *against* us, who is *for* us?" "It is God that *condemneth*; who is he that shall *justify*?" God has put this solemn question beforehand to our human reason

and conscience. He asks our own moral judgments to forecast the decision. “A man that hath set at nought Moses’ law *dieth without compassion* on the word of two or three witnesses : *of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant . . . an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace ?*”

CHAPTER VII.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST AS A REVELATION OF THE FATHER.

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up [unto death] for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?”—ST. PAUL.

“HIS SON.” The Lord Jesus was God and man. While born of a woman He was begotten of God.¹ Adam, in the evangelical genealogy, is “son of God.”² So our Saviour, as to His human nature, like Adam, was the immediate creation of God. “His own Son” is an epithet of much higher import. It is unique. It is nowhere applied to any merely human being. It is the name of “The everlasting Son of the Father.” The title is unshared by any of the inhabitants of the upper world. “Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son?” So demands St. Paul. To no one of them. He had been the sole manifestation of God in the heavenly places.

“His *own* Son.” Is there not an implied con-

¹ Luke i. 35.

² Luke iii. 38.

trast in "own"? Men are by nature the offspring of God. Sons, as descriptive of men, is mainly ethical. They are begotten again; they become sons by adoption. Jesus Christ is "His own Son." He never knew estrangement; He never experienced recovery; He never confessed a sin; He never acknowledged a moral weakness or defect. He saw no attainments in excellence, high as the stars above Him, and after which He panted in vain. In His last hours He protested to the Father His own perfection: "I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given me to do."¹ Never did such words proceed from the lips of any sane human being before, and never will again to the world's end. The consciousness of Christ is out of the order of nature.

§ 1. "*He spared not His own Son.*" These are startling words. The palpable implication is that the Father would have "spared" Him if He could. What a sudden and wonderful insight into the heart of the Father opens on us! We are not astonished that our blessed Lord would have been "spared," had it been possible. Think of *the greatness of His nature*. Creation was His work.

¹ John xvii. 4.

Universal providence is His care. He is the image of the Deity to all the hosts of heaven. Then He is *very near and dear to the Father*. "The Son of His love," St. Paul calls him.¹ He is above all creation, the sharer of His own Divinity, One with Himself. "He spared" Him "not." What can it mean?

1. Clearly, the Father, in His love to the world, did not withhold Him from us. Plainly, then, Jesus Christ was not one possible expedient among many, through which salvation might have been wrought out for man. He was God's only resort. This, in part, is the Father's own vindication in "sparing not His own Son," but sending Him to incarnation and sacrifice. If the Father's love could have flowed to us through any other channel than through the earthly life and atoning sufferings of "His own Son," it would have been chosen. "O my Father, if it *be possible*, let this cup pass away from me," was the agonised cry of "His own Son." It might not be. He would have "spared" Him if He could.

Adaptation to environment is the order of nature. If a plant flourishes in luxuriance in our soil, there is evident suitability to our sunless clime. If another only droops and dwindles here,

¹ Col. i. 13.

but in the tropics mounts to perfection and clothes itself in massive beauty, the lands of torrid heat are its natural home. The same law is apparent in human life. If a post of responsibility is vacant, and numerous candidates seek to discharge its duties and enjoy its emoluments, to whom do you assign it? To the man who possesses the largest number of qualifications to fill it.

No angel was equal to the work of Christ. There are stupendous beings above, wearing titles derived from the highest earthly dignities—"thrones," "dominions," "principalities," and "powers."¹ No one among them could receive the vocation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are works which only God can perform. They are incapable of delegation to any mere creature, human or angelic. To create, uphold, or save are acts possible to God only. If you ruffle the plumage of an insect's wing or crush the meanest flower that blows, not all our boasting science can repair the mischief. Redemption calls for a Divine agent. God Himself had to come down amongst us. All other might was weakness. No love but His own could bear the strain and achieve the victory. The joy is His own. He could not give it to another. If you saw a child

¹ Col. i. 16.

drowning, and plunged into the flood, snatched him from destruction and brought him safe to land, you would feel glad and thankful that you were able to rescue an imperilled life. Oh! but you know nothing of the mother's joy who saw him sink, gave him up for lost, and now clasps him alive to her bosom. Her joy is all her own. Only in infinitesimal measures will the servant enter into the joy of his Lord.

2. "He spared not His own Son." He left Him exposed to the full force of the hardships and obstacles of His undertaking. No space was cleared in the midst of which He might appear without trial or pain, care or woe. No path was smoothed for His blessed feet to tread in. He became a burdened, tempted, suffering, and sorrowing man among burdened, tempted, suffering, and sorrowing men. Our ways of flint and thorn were reddened with His footprints.

If a son of yours were to give himself to an enterprise of folly, you might be able to shield him from many of the results of his imprudence. But there is no method for softening the arduous career of duty and of benevolence. Suppose that you sent forth your first-born to war. The military conflicts which we would undertake to vindicate have been few; but we can imagine such. If ruthless despo-

tisms leagued against our free cliffs and assaulted our unconquered hearths and homes with sword and flame, you would consent to yield your son to cold, hunger, weariness, peril, disease, wounds, agonies, and death. All these are the possibilities of the battlefield; they are certainties to many. Some of these infelicities all must experience.

Or, if you please, surrender your son to missionary exploration, to the career of a Livingstone. Hardships, toil, pestilence, danger, savagery, and exposure to a thousand deaths lie before him. You can make your choice. You may send him forth, or you may hold him back and keep him in your home. But, if you bid him go, you cannot "*spare*" him. He must take all hazards and bear all consequences; you cannot screen him from the results. God Himself is not exempted from the conditions under which He has created us. "He *spared* not His own Son, but delivered Him up" to all the severities, difficulties, and endurances inseparable from His enterprise.

3. "He spared not His own Son." He could not mitigate the rigours of His holy law in His favour. The laws of God in nature are not the moral law of God, though in their operation they often become the sanctions of His moral law. "Law is not made for a righteous man, but for

the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane," &c.¹ Then law was not made for Jesus Christ. He was sinless. When sent into the world, He ought to have been shielded by the law and exempted from its penalties. Justice to the innocent, and rectitude and veracity in the Sovereign Ruler, required it. But it was not done. Instead, our Lord suffered the extreme penalty of the law—death. He should have been protected from even the most trivial endurance.

What light does Holy Scripture throw on this mystery? The Son of God became in our nature the Representative Head of our race. The Father sent Him for this very end in His great love. In love our Saviour voluntarily assumed liabilities not His own for the release of all who believe in Him. Hence He was "born" into our world "under the law."² But in what peculiar manner was He born "under the law"? Was it "under the law" as it ought to have been to Him, since He always obeyed it? No! He was born "under the law," which was already, and had long been, broken, and its penalties in full operation. He accepted existence with men and for men "under the law" which they had violated, and the sanctions of

¹ 1 Tim. i. 9.

² Gal. iv. 4.

which were being enforced. To assume our humanity and live among men was a plunge into the midst of penalties in action.

There are other facts which point in the same direction. Our Lord was subjected to circumcision, which meant the putting away of evil; but He had no evil to put away. He submitted to baptism, which signified cleansing from sin, but He had no sin from which to be purified. The acknowledgment of transgressions not His own is the only rational and adequate explanation of our Lord's circumcision and baptism. In death He bore the supreme penalty and curse, not for Himself, but for others—for men. God could not lower and dishonour the claims of His own law, which is the expression of His own holiness. It is childish to deny this truth because in some aspects we do not understand it. It is more than foolish to reject it because it cannot be harmonised with transitory speculations which will evaporate in a decade.

God's own Son, His image to all rational and moral beings, the Revealer and Administrator of holy law, Himself bowed beneath the penalty, and accepted the curse instead of the guilty, and for their deliverance. To trample on law is to trample on God. To debase law is to debase all creation.

§ 2. The cross is not only the expression of the Father's love to men, but the pledge that His love will assuredly minister all that men can ask or need at His hands. "How shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?"¹ Having done the greater, He cannot withhold the less. What a faith in the love of God should the cross of Christ inspire! The children are to be our models. A little one, who has received many a large and costly gift, is wishing for some trivial indulgence. In what spirit does he ask for it? Knowing well that he will encounter nothing but an acquiescent smile and an outstretched hand.

Then ponder the contrast. God had to put a strong hand of restraint on His own affection in sending forth "His own Son." He was reluctant to surrender Him to so terrible an enterprise. He would have "spared" Him if He could. So far as God's love to us was concerned, He yielded Him up entirely and unreservedly; but so far as "His own Son" was concerned, His love yielded Him to humiliation and anguish and the cross regretfully. The "all things" additional God has always given "freely." Here He never needed to hold Himself back. Pardon, holiness, strength,

¹ Rom. viii. 32.

consolation, life eternal, He never conferred with hesitation or unwillingness. God is always waiting to bestow and never disposed to "spare." There is not a trace of parsimony in the grace displayed in Holy Scripture. All is lavish and God-like.

A widowed mother had an only son. She dedicated him to God from his birth. It was her constant yearning and supplication that he might be a minister of Christ. Childhood passed away. In youth he quietly gave himself to God. But there was no apparent answer to the mother's entreaties. In due time he was sent to business. One day, to the great delight of his mother, he expressed a wish to resign secular employment and preach the Gospel. The tear glistened in the mother's eye. The prayers of long years were fulfilled. He went to college. Years rolled by. Another purpose sprung up within him. Towards the close of his last session he broke to his mother his long-hidden desire to bear the message of salvation to the far-off heathen. That had not been included in her prayers. Her cheek whitened and she was speechless. There was no sleep that night. Her pillow was wet with her tears when she rose. Woman-like and mother-like, she dried her eyes, buried her sadness, and met her son with a cheerful face. She choked down her griefs and put on

a smiling countenance. Nor was that all. The conflict was over. She was saying within, trying, resolved to say, "Thy will be done."

Then came ordination, farewell, and loneliness in the widow's home. Later there were reports of work nobly attempted and nobly done. But his labours were short. His race was soon run. A solitary palm sighs over his early grave on the margin of an Oriental river.

Go and see that mother. Ask her if she has anything left so precious to her that she can keep it back from her God. She will tell you that what was dearer than her life's blood she has given up. All else is held with a slack hand. Her gift she does not regret, and would not recall it. It was done in the spirit of her Heavenly Father, who "spared not His own Son ;" and all else she accounts as held at His bidding.

Only one writer in the New Testament applies to our Saviour the epithet "His only-begotten Son," and that is the Apostle of Love. How came he to select it? It had an evident fascination for him. When God inspires a man to utter a supernatural message, He does not ignore and override his human personality. Inspiration runs along the lines of a man's individual faculties, history, and experience, and uses them all. Hence you can

distinguish a letter of St. Paul from one of St. James, and a letter of St. John from either by means of their marked characteristics. Had St. John an only child? When he reached the bloom of early manhood, did he sicken and pass to an early grave? When the hopes of St. John for his son seemed on the point of realisation, was he doomed to see them all wither away? We cannot tell. Yet it seems probable that some such an occurrence may have imparted to the name—"Only-begotten Son"—a meaning, an impressiveness, and a pathos which constrained him to return to it again and again.

God has nothing to give equal to what He has given. When His Son disappeared from heaven His chief treasure was gone. God has done His greatest. No further pledge is needed that all else shall follow. Everything in the earth shall be subdued to the welfare of the faithful, and heaven at last receive their souls. "How shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?"

Truth always bears two aspects. The brighter the light, the blacker the shadow. What a dark forecast this most blessed assurance projects into the future. God "spared not His own Son," "the Son of His love," on a mission to save, fulfilling the purpose dear to His own fatherliness. Then God

cannot “spare” those who will be lost. Calvary is a terrible spectacle to impenitence. Jesus could not come between us and our doom without sufferings—sufferings beyond our power to comprehend. What, then, must await men exposed to all the effects of a broken law without a Saviour? To the believing, the cross is a pillar of fire, giving light in the darkest night. To the unrighteous, it is the blackest of all clouds. Thunders are pent in it. Wrathful lightnings slumber there.

What an unveiling to us of the heart of the Father we behold in the words of the Apostle! We rightly think of the tremendous cost of redemption to our Lord Jesus Christ in toil and endurance. We are apt to be blind to the fact that the Father had His cross to bear as well as the Son. A father would sooner lay down his own life than send forth a son to self-sacrifice, even to the shedding of his blood. The heart of the Father was wounded in the sufferings of His Son. His affections were wrung. Oh! the unknown expenditure of love to the Father! We shall never fathom the depths of that marvellous saying, “God so *loved the world* as that He *gave His only-begotten Son*.” When an earthly parent consents that his son shall go to the mission-field, he hopes for the best. He trusts that he may escape pestilence, injury, and death. He desires

for him long life, success, and honour. God knew all that lay in the path of His Son beforehand in every particular. Concealment was impossible. Yet His love was equal to the strain.

It should be the aim of our faith to be impressed at all times with the great love of God to us. We cannot estimate the gift of Christ, nor measure the love from which it proceeds. The firmament is great. As our telescopes dive farther and farther into its abysses, it becomes vaster and vaster. There is no limit. So the love of God to us grows with the growth of our knowledge. There is no boundary.

The love of God is always beforehand on our side. What great things He did when we were ignorant of Him! There is no sight more touching than a number of little curly heads immersed in sweetest slumber. What know they of the toil, the forethought, the care, the expense which have gone to ensure their quiet pillow and their peaceful sleep? They have to become men and women, and fathers and mothers, before they can understand the wealth of affection which has been lavished on their happiness. So it is with us. Long centuries before we lived Christ died for our sins. Our eternal blessedness is safe in the hands of God. He has unlocked his treasures,

opened His palace doors, and prepared a banquet for the world. He will leave none to faint and die by the way for the want of the bread and water of life, as they press onward and upward along the arduous path to His Divine abode.

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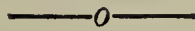
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